THE NEW THEOLOGY AND THE OLD RELIGION

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THE NEW THEOLOGY

AND

THE OLD RELIGION

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AND
THE OLD RELIGION

BEING EIGHT LECTURES, TOGETHER WITH FIVE SERMONS

BY CHARLES GORE, D.D., D.C.L.
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PREFACE

THIS volume consists mainly of the substance of lectures delivered in the Cathedral of Birmingham at the midday services in Lent of this year. The lectures were delivered only from notes, and were not completely reported. They have therefore been written entirely afresh, with amplification and rearrangement. They are now in eight, instead of six, portions. But I have still called them lectures, as they retain the form and manner of lectures.

I have added some sermons preached on other occasions. This involves—in the case of the first three sermons—some repetition, which I hope will be forgiven, as I thought that the point of view of each of the sermons was sufficiently different from that of the lectures to justify its preservation; and they amplify and expand points of importance.

I do not endeavour in these lectures or sermons to discuss the great psychological or metaphysical questions which occasionally come near to the surface: *e.g.* the psychological question of the manner in which we are to suppose that the human subject, the prophet or the common man, becomes conscious of a divine communication; or the metaphysical question of the legitimacy of restating the substance of such communications, believed to be divine, as intellectual propositions, valid for the whole area of human knowledge. But I am sure that God, the Father of spirits, has really conveyed true and coherent impressions of Himself to the human spirit, through the medium of the common conscience and of specially susceptible individuals, called prophets, who have been the enlighteners of the common conscience; and I am sure that these *impressions of God* legitimately appear in the intelligence of men as *convictions of truth*: and therefore are legitimately expressed as *propositions for the intellect* which have an equal claim to express reality with propositions based upon the observation of nature.

I am sure also that the self-disclosure of God which reached its culmination in Jesus Christ is final, and that by the very necessity of the case. That is to say, if Jesus Christ is God incarnate, no fuller disclosure of God in terms of manhood than is given in His person is conceivable or possible. I believe, therefore, that we need to hold fast the distinction between the revelation as once given through the prophets and in Jesus Christ, and the dogma which protects this revelation, or the theology which elaborates and seeks to harmonize it with the whole of knowledge. My object in these lectures is mainly to make plain, as against the assumptions of the New Theology, the substance of the original revelation as it touches the nature of God, of sin, of Christ, &c.

I think the movement called the New Theology is a highly important movement. Mr. Campbell has fastened upon certain tendencies of thought which have been long at work amongst us, and brought them forward into the arena of common and popular discussion. I have tried to follow him into this arena, and to show the fundamental

incongruity of his leading ideas with the original Christian revelation, and the essential superiority of the ideas which the Christian revelation really contains.

C. BIRMINGHAM :

ST. LUKE'S DAY, 1907.

CONTENTS

LECTURES

		PAGE
I.	THE NEW THEOLOGY	1
II.	THE OLD RELIGION	19
III.	THE IMMANENCE OF GOD	42
IV.	THE IDEA OF SIN	60
V.	THE MEANING OF CHRIST'S DIVINITY	84
VI.	MIRACLES	109
VII.	THE ATONEMENT AND THE INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE	131
VIII.	THE NEW THEOLOGY AND THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND	150

SERMONS

PAGE

I. THE CREED AND COMMON LIFE . . 181

II. THE PERMANENT CREED . . . 205

III. THE CHRISTIAN IDEA OF SIN . 231

IV. SACRIFICE, THE GENIUS OF CHRISTIANITY 251

V. THE CHURCH AND THE POOR . . 274

APPENDIX

REPORT ON THE MORAL WITNESS OF THE CHURCH ON ECONOMIC SUBJECTS . 297

LECTURES

LECTURE I

THE NEW THEOLOGY

THERE is no doubt that we are passing through a period of unsettlement in religious beliefs. Some men are unsettled because they have seriously tried to 'think for themselves': that is, to grapple with fundamental religious problems, philosophical or critical—such problems as

> Hover on the bounds of mortal ken,
> And have perplexed, and will unto the end
> Perplex the brains of men—

such problems, I mean, as that of the compatibility of human freedom with universal law or the divine foreknowledge. A person of ordinary intelligence and ordinary occupation can receive a creed, and test its working value in experience, and satisfy himself, more or less fully, on its historical grounds, and distinguish well enough between what is reasonable and

what is superstitious; but it is very few of us who can give ourselves up to the impartial speculative consideration of ultimate and fundamental problems in metaphysics or in criticism with any other result but mental bewilderment. The difficulty of the subjects in themselves and the variety of the opinions entertained upon them by competent leaders of thought are equally causes of this bewilderment.

It is not more than the plain truth to say that, in the sense of really obtaining an independent opinion worth having on the fundamental questions of religion, very few of us are qualified, by capacity or training, to 'think for ourselves.'

But also very few seriously attempt it. And an Englishman who has possession of a conviction which he thinks he holds on solid practical grounds—a good working creed—is not very easily disturbed by speculative doubts. He is not easily 'afraid of any evil tidings.' But there are a great many people whose convictions on religious subjects are very far from solid. They would confess that they have very little religious experience, or perhaps spiritual sensibility. They do not read more on such subjects

than a newspaper review or a magazine article. Thus, when they hear of every traditional belief being questioned by men of apparent learning and integrity, their convictions, such as they were, even on quite fundamental subjects, are quite undermined. How shall they decide where learned men disagree?

Again, there are others—and those a great number—who are disgusted by the unworthiness of the Christianity which they see around them. They are alienated by the divisions among us Christians, by our bitterness or pettiness, or by the worldliness of orthodox believers. The Christian churches seem to them to make no serious struggle against the forces which enslave masses of men in social and moral degradation, and to exhibit no real likeness of Jesus of Nazareth. A great many men, that is to say, disbelieve in current Christianity because they desire something more like Jesus Christ.

And there are others who hold their religious convictions piously and fervently, and who yet add to the prevailing scepticism: for they are distressed because questions are even raised about subjects of such

sanctity. They resent altogether the atmosphere of free inquiry, and by their nervousness and apparent distrust of the power of truth to prevail in the open field, they do more than they suspect to propagate the opinion that the Christian religion is an old-fashioned superstition which cannot bear investigation.

In such an age of religious unsettlement it is as well to remember that, after all, it is to ages of such mental ferment as ours, and not to ages of mental stagnation, that we owe our great debts of gratitude for the works of religious construction. It was from an age of universal intellectual ferment and unsettlement that there emerged the solid structure of the catholic creeds; it was in an atmosphere of serious unsettlement that Butler and others in the eighteenth century relaid the intellectual foundation on which Wesley and Simeon and Pusey and Newman built their works of spiritual recovery. If religion is 'the pearl of great price' we must not expect to win it cheaply, and intellectual trouble is no more to be resented than pain of body.

The reason of contemporary unsettlement is not hard to find. Within the last

century our ordinary intellectual categories —that means those large headings under which we think of things, those broad assumptions which we carry into life to enable us to hold together all our wide and manifold experience—those intellectual categories have been changed. For instance, the dominance of the conception of evolution—the conception, that is, of the universe with all its forms of life and all its mode of thought as being in a ceaseless process of change—and the opening out of the almost infinite vistas of time in the process of the world's development; and more recently the breaking up of the idea of solid matter into something elusive and unimaginable—such new modes of thought have had a profound effect upon the human imagination, accustomed till quite recently to regard the various kinds of things as stable and fixed, created a few thousand years ago to be what they have been ever since. The change wrought in the imaginations of men is as great as when they first found out, three centuries ago, that this world was not the centre of the universe, that there was no heaven over our heads and no hell under our feet. No one, in fact,

can appreciate in any measure the change in our conceptions of the physical universe since Butler's day, since the day which saw the rise of the Evangelical or even of the Tractarian movement, without feeling that a convulsion in the religious world also must have taken place ; that it could hardly have been possible for a religion associated as ours was with the old ideas of nature, to be detached from these and readjusted to the new science without a great deal of mental disturbance. And the changes which have taken place in historical criticism since, shall I say, Hume wrote his *History of England* have hardly been less considerable than the change in physical science. I say, then, that a religion accustomed to the old intellectual world could not learn to be at home in the new without very deep and wide religious unsettlement. The task which we have got to accomplish is that of going back upon our foundations, of distinguishing what is essential and permanent and really catholic in our religion from what belongs only to some more or less temporary phase of thought, or arrangement of society, or some more or less local association of belief and circumstance.

These really essential and permanent and catholic principles and institutions of the Christian faith have to be detached from the decaying order, or the mode of thought which has become antiquated, and set to work afresh to prove their vitality in the new order, and to show their capacity to make a new home for themselves in a modern world of thought and life.

In doing this there are two classes of persons who have to be resisted—the one conservative and the other revolutionary.

There are those who seem to think that in dangerous days such as these our only course is to hold fast, with an even blind adhesion, to our religion as it was handed down to us, unrevised and uncriticized. They meet any demand for an abandonment of an old-fashioned view, not by asking whether the view was essential to our faith, but by an appeal to us 'not to puzzle the minds of the young,' or by the assertion that what was good enough for their fathers is good enough for them. To allow mistakes in current teaching is stigmatized as 'dangerous'; concession is declared to be only a prelude to surrender, and parleying to savour of treason.

On the other hand, you have the people who seem to think that every clever new criticism is destined to triumph over an established position. They forget that the revolutionists of history are always disappointed; that counter reformations follow reformations; that old ideas have a wonderfully recuperative power. They forget also the very recent history of biblical criticism. Let us listen to Dr. Harnack's recent observations in his work *Luke the Physician.*[1]

> This book must be subjected to a separate and stringent examination—so the critics demand; but this examination, so they say, is already completed, and has led to the certain conclusion that tradition is here in the wrong—the Acts cannot have been composed by a companion and fellow-worker of St. Paul. . . . The indefensibility of the tradition is regarded as being so clearly established that nowadays it is thought scarcely worth while to prove this indefensibility afresh, or even to notice the arguments of conservative opponents. Indeed, it seems that there exists a disposition to ignore the fact that such arguments still exist. Julicher feels compelled to regard the ascription of the book to St. Luke as a 'romantic ideal.' So quickly does criticism forget

[1] *Luke the Physician* (Engl. trans., Williams & Norgate, 1907), pp. 6 f.

its true function, with such bigoted obstinacy does it cling to its hypotheses.

But in spite of this consensus of 'critical' authority, Harnack, whom no one can accuse of conservative prejudices, surveys the evidence, and pronounces without hesitation in favour of St. Luke's authorship of the whole book of the Acts, as well as of the third Gospel. And no doubt he represents the tendency of critical investigation, at least in England. To be conservative in criticism, then, is not always to be wrong.

What we need is frankness of mind. In any settled period the permanent faith becomes encrusted with more or less temporary elements, the gold becomes mixed with dross; and when a turn of the wheel of thought takes place we must have the intellectual courage to seek to dissociate the permanent from the impermanent, to draw distinctions between essential and accidental, to make concessions and to seek readjustment.

Is, then, the settlement proposed by 'the New Theology' the right one? The New Theology is a convenient name for a current mode of thought which in its teaching about God lays the greatest stress

upon what is called the 'divine immanence' in nature and man, which regards God, that is, not as the sovereign lord and judge, but as the universal Spirit manifesting Himself in all things and all men; which accepts most unreservedly the idea of development in nature and human history; which assimilates Christ to other men as being essentially the same, and only the same, in nature; which proposes a less grave estimate of sin; which disparages or repudiates miracles in God's revelation of Himself. I might point to many writers as more or less representing this school; I must make special reference to its most popular author, the Rev. R. J. Campbell.[1] But you will find no better exponent of this tendency than Sir Oliver Lodge, and no manual which exhibits it in so favourable a light as his catechism *The Substance of Faith allied with Science*.[2]

The New Theology is one result of the breakdown of the old materialism, and the kind of agnosticism represented by Mr. Herbert Spencer. For we are living in a period of reaction from 'naturalism' of all

[1] *The New Theology* (Chapman & Hall, 1907).
[2] Published by Methuen.

kinds. Science, it is now perceived—that is, the investigation of the facts, sequences, and laws observable in nature—is not complete in itself, nor is it man's only method of arriving at truth. It is not complete in itself, for it starts from assumptions. It assumes the universal order, with all its forces at work, of the origin of which it can give no account. And it is not our only method for arriving at truth. Account must be taken of other faculties: the consciousness of self, the conscience of right and wrong, the will, the heart, the imagination, the spiritual faculties of man. These too bear a valid testimony. They are real means of access to reality. Thus experimental science, by all its methods of inquiry, may discern neither God, nor freedom, nor immortality; but they may be realities, credible or certain, nevertheless. It is enough that the deliberate and proved verdicts of science should be accepted with the reverence due to them, and given their lofty place in the whole of human knowledge and belief.

But it is with the whole of human experience and knowledge and belief, and not only with the conclusions of science,

that philosophy and religion in different ways are concerned. And the free and comprehensive thought of philosophy appears in our day to be reverting very generally to a spiritual interpretation of the universe. This I believe to be the case both in Europe and America.[1] In France there is, I am informed, a noticeable revival of the intellectual authority of Pascal, which would mean a recognition of the strict limitation of the sphere of science, properly so called, and an open door for reasonable faith. What is plain to see is that there has in quite recent years been a remarkable group of distinguished men of letters in France—Brunetière, Huysmans, Bourget, Coppée, Verlaine, Retté—who have been converted, and have proclaimed their conversion, from extreme hostility to religion, to enthusiastic and devoted membership in the catholic church. This has arrested the interest of Europe.[2] In England the

[1] See G. Villa, *Idealismo moderno* (Turin, 1905), pp. 425ff., and A. B. D. Alexander's *History of Philosophy* (Maclehose, 1907), pp. 583–8.

[2] 'Les futurs historiens de notre littérature à la fin du xix. siècle seront forcés de reconnaître, par exemple, que Brunetière, le grand critique, le puissant dialecticien, que Bourget, le pénétrant romancier, l'excellent peintre

return to faith of the distinguished biologist George Romanes on grounds which received an incomplete but very interesting statement in his fragmentary *Thoughts on Religion*,[1] has been followed more recently by a similar return described by Mr. George Palmer, in his *Agnostic's Progress*.[1] And I fancy that the progress and recovery described in these books is typical of a very general tendency, so far at least as the acceptance of a spiritual view of the world is concerned.

Sir Oliver Lodge's *Substance of Faith allied with Science* is not of course in agreement with the Apostles' Creed on all points, and I am proposing to subject its phrases in certain respects to criticism. Nor, again, would its author claim to have any mandate to speak for scientific men as a whole. But it is a representative work. And we are entitled to call out into clear light the fact that a distinguished representative of science can produce, as 'consistent with the

de la société moderne, que Huysmans, le rare et précieux artiste en style, que Verlaine, le poète délicieusement naïf, malgré ses égarements, furent des catholiques—et des catholiques qui, tous, sont revenus à la foi après l'avoir longtemps oubliée ou perdue' (François Coppée, in his preface to Adolphe Retté's *Du Diable à Dieu*).

[1] Published by Longmans.

teachings of science in its widest sense, as well as with those of literature and philosophy,'[1] so unhesitating a proclamation of a spiritual creed, such strong affirmations of God and immortality and freedom and the value of prayer, and the real communion of man with other spiritual beings whom he cannot see but must believe to exist. As Sir Oliver has allied himself with the New Theology, and as I have the intention of criticizing him, it is a pleasure first of all to express admiration for the beauty of temper, the reverence of spirit, and the careful constructive skill of expression, which mark his work. And I am venturing, at this point, to quote at length his 'creed,' his definition of moral freedom, and his plea for a right kind of agnosticism in place of a wrong.

I believe in one infinite and eternal Being, a guiding and loving Father, in whom all things consist.

I believe that the Divine Nature is specially revealed to man through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lived and taught and suffered in Palestine 1900 years ago, and has since been worshipped by the Christian Church as the immortal Son of God, the Saviour of the world.

I believe that the Holy Spirit is ever ready to

[1] *The Substance of Faith allied with Science*, p. 5.

help us along the way towards goodness and truth; that prayer is a means of communion between man and God; and that it is our privilege, through faithful service, to enter into the life eternal, the communion of saints, and the peace of God. [1]

For our present purpose we regard the sense of conscience [in man] as the most important and highest characteristic of all,—the sense of responsibility, the power of self-determination, the building up of character, so that ultimately it becomes impossible to be actuated by unworthy motives. Our actions are now controlled not by external impulses only, but largely by our own characters and wills. The man who is the creature of impulse, or the slave of his passions, cannot be said to be his own master, or to be really free: he drifts hither and thither according to the caprice or the temptation of the moment; he is untrustworthy, and without solidity or dignity of character. The free man is he who can control himself, who does not obey every idea as it occurs to him, but weighs and determines for himself, and is not at the mercy of external influences. This is the real meaning of choice and free will. It does not mean that actions are capricious and undetermined; but that they are determined by nothing less than the totality of things. They are not determined by the external world alone, o that they can be calculated and predicted from outside; they are determined by self and the external world together. A free man is the master of his motives, and selects that motive which he wills to obey.[2]

[1] ibid., p. 96. [2] ibid., p 27.

We, insignificant creatures, with senses only just open to the portentous meaning of the starry sky, presume—some of us—to deny the existence of higher powers and higher knowledge than our own. We are accustomed to be careful as to what we assert; we are liable to be unscrupulous as to what we deny. It is possible to find people who, knowing nothing or next to nothing of the universe, are prepared to limit existence to that of which they have had experience, and to measure the cosmos in terms of their own understanding. Their confidence in themselves, their shut minds and self-satisfied hearts, are things to marvel at. The fact is that no glimmer of a conception of the real magnitude and complexity of existence can ever have illuminated their cosmic view.[1]

The position represented by the New Theology is of course to be differently estimated when it is proposed to us, or as it is proposed to us in these extracts, from the side of science, and when it is advocated, in other terms, by ministers of the catholic creed, or of Nonconformist bodies who have been identified with the same fundamental belief. In these latter cases it represents an abandonment of specific beliefs which it will be the business of these pages to show to be really integral to the

[1] *The Substance of Faith*, etc., p. 63.

creed of Christendom. In these cases, I say, it represents abandonment, and not progress. But, viewed as an advance from the side of science, I desire at starting to give the warmest welcome to so spiritual a creed.

The author of *The Substance of Faith*, and those who think with him, are not infrequently quoted as authorities in virtue of what they doubt or deny—or are supposed to doubt or deny—whether it is the fall of man, or the real occurrence of miracles, or the deity of Christ. To those who are disposed thus to quote them, I would suggest this consideration.

The belief of most of us must be largely influenced by authority. The authority which ought to make the greatest and most reasonable impression upon our minds is the corporate and age-long authority of the witnessing church. That represents the widest and largest spiritual experience. And, short of that, we must reasonably be influenced by the authority of any individual whose learning and character commend his judgement as trustworthy. But it is surely unworthy to defer to the authority of any one for what he denies, or is supposed to deny, and to refuse it for what he

maintains. A man, in fact, is much more likely to be mistaken in what he denies than in what he affirms. What he affirms is what he realizes. What he denies may be only what he fails to realize.

To any doubter, then, whom I can reach who is supposed to refer for his doubts to the authority of the New Theology, I would say first of all: You are rejecting what these men reject, but are you believing what they believe? After all, if you hold and practise the creed which has just been quoted, you will not be indeed in the full stream of the church's belief, but you will at least be within sight of the city of God.

LECTURE II

THE OLD RELIGION[1]

A LIVING theology must always in a sense be a new theology. For theology, rightly understood, is not the same thing as religion, or as the revelation on which religion rests, or the dogmas which it maintains. But it is the attempt of the intellect of men to express their religious belief in intellectual forms and to bring it into harmony with the thought of their time—with all truth so far as it is known. But the New Theology which we are concerned with is characterized (as I shall endeavour to show) by a very inadequate respect for the old religion which it seeks to reinterpret, and indeed by a very inadequate appreciation of its principles and its history. It is an attempt of the contemporary intellect

[1] The subject of the chapter is dealt with again from a somewhat different point of view in Sermons i and ii, pp. 181, 205.

to express the truth about God and man as seems best to it, with very little regard to the experience of the past. It has the marks of the contemporary intellectual workshop all over it.

But the speculative intellect of any epoch is of itself very fallible, as experience has shown; and religious continuity is of extreme importance. Thus the theology of the time should, as it seems to me, start from at least a serious and respectful consideration of the old religion, the Christian religion which claims to rest upon a real revelation or self-disclosure of God, once for all given in the person of Jesus Christ; which claims to be a catholic religion, for all men and for all time.

I propose, then, having given some account of the New Theology, to proceed to give some account of the idea and method of the old religion. It is, of course, as you would all recognize at once, the claim of Christianity to proclaim a catholic faith—that means a religion for all men, which will satisfy and embrace all men and all kinds of men, and last for all time. The first part of this description of catholicity, that it is adequate for all races and kinds

of men, introduces a very interesting subject, with which I do not at present propose to deal. What I am concerned with is the second part of that description, the permanence which is claimed for the Christian faith. 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.' The Christian church came out at once into the world claiming to proclaim a message from God, a self-disclosure of God, which had been made in many parts and many manners, slowly and gradually, and which in the person of Jesus Christ had been made in its final form as far as this world was concerned; so that there could be no disclosure of God to man more perfect, or adequate, and no disclosure of what was possible for manhood in relation to God more complete, than was given in the person of Jesus Christ, Himself God and man.

Here, of course, at the very threshold of our statement, you are confronted with a surprising claim, which gives you occasion to be critical. You naturally feel that this is a very changing world. Things become antiquated; forms of thought pass and change. How, then, can it be reasonable to suppose that a revelation couched in

human language, a revelation enshrined in human formulas, can be permanent in a world as changing as our world is? Here, then, arises an important question. Does the whole of our human nature change, even slowly? or is it the case that underneath what is changing, underneath what develops and grows, there is such a thing as a permanent humanity, a humanity in which the nineteenth century and the first century are as one, which through the changes of the ages remains in its wants and capacities, speaking practically, constant and unchanged? You will remember how the poet Wordsworth speaks of another poet, Burns, and gives it as his merit that he appeals to the general heart of man—

> Deep in the general heart of men
> His power survives.

You will recognize that a great deal of the pleasure which students find in ancient literature lies in the recognition of this common manhood; so that we can shake hands across the ages with some one who lived long ago, under conditions socially and intellectually altogether different from our own. You find, for instance, some

words of Homer come to you with a quite fresh force and power of entrancing delight, simply because they make you feel the reality of that 'general heart of man' which is something that under all changes remains constant. And if it makes a really catholic poetry possible, it may make also a catholic religion possible, a religion that will appeal to the same humanity in the nineteenth century and in the first.

Let us look closer into the matter. Religion appeals to a certain set of spiritual needs and faculties which undoubtedly exist in human nature wherever you find it. Any one examining human nature with a merely scientific curiosity would see that the soul of a man moves out in different directions. It moves out towards nature to appropriate its resources; and it moves out towards other men to knit together the bonds of society. Herein lies the progress of civilization. But there is another movement which is also universal—that is, the movement out towards God, the feeling after Him and finding Him. Of that movement of human nature towards God what are the characteristics? It is at bottom an aspiration towards God, a craving which

exists in man for divine fellowship and eternal life, a life which is beyond and deeper than the changes and chances of our own every-day life. This craving is rooted in a profound sense of need, and of the weakness, the transitoriness, the fragility of human life. With this sense of need there is the sense of sin, of the pollution, the unworthiness, the rebellion, which prevent this human nature of ours from finding the free access towards God which it desires. With this again there is the desire for pardon and peace and reconciliation. And, mingling with this instinct, which is in effect the instinct of prayer and communion with God, there is also the sense of kinship and fellowship with our fellow men with whom we desire to enter into this communion with God, not as individuals, but as members of the human family. Now I ask—Do not these things belong precisely to that humanity which is through all classes and in all periods identical, so that we should find no difficulty in looking for a classical and perfect expression of these fundamental religious wants far back across the ages?

Where can we find it? I reply, in the

Psalms. I say to any one who will apply his mind to think about this subject, Can you conceive any better expression of those fundamental human wants than you get in the Psalms? There are things in the Psalms which are not at all of this permanent and satisfying character. There are imprecations upon the enemies of Israel, or upon the enemies of the individual friend of God, which express something lower than a Christian level of feeling. If the Church of England were not so conservative of doubtful and dangerous things as well as of good things, I fancy it would not have these imprecations, which require so much explanation, recited in the public services. But much more readily there come into your minds passages of the Psalms expressive of all the feelings I have enumerated; and I ask you, Is there anything in that expression of those fundamental religious wants which you feel could be better—which you feel is antiquated? Do you not simply find there the expression of exactly what mankind everywhere, in the twentieth century after Christ as much as in the sixth century before Christ, feels, and wants?

The Old Testament is confessedly imperfect. In the Old Testament we find human nature gradually being trained to know its own true wants, as well as to receive the word of God which was gradually being spoken to satisfy those wants. There are then, I say, imperfections which we perceive in the Psalms, as we look back upon them in the light of Christ's perfection, as well as obscurities, where the true sense cannot be recovered. But the bulk of the Psalms expresses the soul's fundamental search for God in all its moods and phases of triumph and depression, in all its exultant joy and its profound misery. The twenty-third psalm, 'The Lord is my Shepherd'; the twenty-fifth, 'Unto Thee, O Lord, will I lift up my soul'; the twenty-seventh, 'The Lord is my light'; the thirtieth, 'I will magnify Thee, O Lord'; the thirty-first, 'In Thee, O Lord, have I put my trust'; the thirty-eighth, 'Put me not to rebuke, O Lord'—these are only instances which could be multiplied till almost all the Psalms were named. Here, so far as expression of the fundamental want is concerned, is permanent religion. Here is the humanity which underlies all develop-

ments. Here is the explanation of a catholic religion. For it is to this religious consciousness, thus brought to full and conscious expression, that the revelation of Christ appeals: and it can be permanent because it gives a full satisfaction to a permanent want.

Now I get to my next point. The Christian revelation, which is, or claims to be, the permanent response of God to the permanent human need, quite certainly appeals, not primarily to the intellect, but primarily to what in the Scripture is called the heart, which means not only the emotions, but the personality: the whole central self—which moves out in action and expresses itself in thought and feeling, but which, as it were, lies below both intellect and feeling and action. Our religion appeals to the central self—the heart of man.

I want to impress this upon you if I can. You will remember that striking scene where our Lord is represented as saying: 'I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.' [1] The meaning

[1] Matt. xi. 25, Luke x. 21.

of this saying becomes apparent if you read the Gospels as a whole. The 'wise and prudent' among the Jews were the rulers and rabbis and scribes; and the great centre of their authority and their traditional learning was in Jerusalem. If you read the Gospel of St. John you will find that our Lord gave the wise and prudent in Jerusalem their chance, and that they would not accept Him. They were occupied with the traditions of their schools and the pride of their order, and this lay teacher, as He seemed to them, was despised and rejected; they would not hear Him. Then the narrative of the Synoptic Gospels, the narrative of our Lord's teaching in Galilee, represents the fresh start which He made in a new field. Galilee was a great and crowded mercantile district, with a population of very mixed origin—'Galilee of the Gentiles.' It was about twice the size of the diocese of Birmingham, and Josephus ascribes to it about four times its population. There may be an exaggeration here—such exaggerations are common in ancient chronicles; but, at any rate, he must have meant to describe a highly populous dis-

trict.[1] There our Lord proclaimed Himself to the miserable and diseased, in works of mercy. But He found His real hearers and chose His disciples among what we should describe as the well-to-do artisan class, men who were neither subject to the temptations of luxury nor, on the other hand, to the corrupting influences of pauperism; men who could pray, 'Give us day by day our daily bread,' who depended on their daily toil for their sustenance; but who were under no conditions such as are corrupting and degrading. There, among men who had no tradition of learning, but were sensible, practical, whole-hearted men, He found His hearers and chose His disciples. These He here calls 'babes,' simple-minded men and women, by contrast with the more sophisticated men who held the chief places in the schools of learning. Observe, He says: 'I thank thee, Father.' It is not merely that He puts up with an inevitable condition, but He recognizes that the strength of His religion lies in the fact that it appeals to the average man, with his average intelligence, with

[1] Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (Longmans), ii. p. 224 (Bk. ii. cap. ix).

his average human wants, and not primarily to the intellect of the schools. St. Paul found out and gloried in just the same thing. He approached the learned at Athens and he went away, as it seems, in bitterness of spirit; his visit produced almost no result. Then he went to Corinth with a determination that he would not have any more of this method, that he would appeal simply to the sense of sin and the need of a saviour, that he would know nothing among them save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And he describes the result. He points out to the Corinthian Christians how the people who make up their young community are the people whom the world reckons of no account, and that the people of importance are almost left out; and he accepts it as being the strength of Christianity that it was to make its appeal not primarily to the intellect, but to the needs of common life; and he anticipates, what happened in fact, that 'the foolish things of the world' would 'put to shame the things that are wise.'[1]

The method of the Christian church,

[1] 1 Cor. i. 19 ff.

then, is not to propound an argument and say, 'Is not this a sound argument?' It does not make its appeal primarily to the intellect. It comes into the world proclaiming something which is by its very nature authoritative—a message from God. And as God is to man, the Creator to the creature, the Father to the child, so the message claims to be accepted, not indeed without inquiry, but still at the last resort in faith. The idea is that of 'receiving the word of God.' It is promised that this message will satisfy your soul's felt and experienced wants, will convince you of its own divinity by its applicability to your need, will prove itself at your heart so that you will find the witness of its truth in yourself, if you will receive it in faith. It is anticipated also that as you set your intellect to work, you will find that, in virtue of your faith, you have a rational account to give of the relations of God to man, which will prove better by far, more adequate, and completer than anything else which you could have got by any other way than this way of acceptance in faith.

Is this method of the old religion, this initial claim upon faith—the receptive

attitude of faith—something which we have a right to resent as unreasonable?

Surely not. For, first, it is the method which, if God be our Father, best corresponds to the real relation in which we all equally, learned or unlearned, stand to Him. Secondly, it is the method by which alone (as far as we can see) men of all kinds and grades of instruction could have been combined or held together in one society. And, thirdly, it is the method that has been justified in experience. Christianity was mocked at by the 'intellectuals' in its beginnings as 'a religion for children and women and fools.' But not then alone in history the intellectuals were mistaken. Christianity brought into the world a higher knowledge of God and of man, a truer philosophy on the deepest subjects, than had yet existed. It represented a profound advance, an infinitely fruitful movement onward toward truth. And the advance came not by way of intellectual speculation, but through men accepting a divine message in faith, and only afterwards, when they had realized its divinity by its experienced results, thinking about its intellectual meaning. Men understood by first, in a measure,

laying aside their criticism and simply believing. I think that in many of the great forward movements of human life it is not the speculative intellect which has been the real pioneer. It has been the pressure of instinct, the felt need for expansion in the heart of man, which has shown the way. I believe that psychology is coming more and more to recognize that the rationality of man lies not only or perhaps chiefly in his self-conscious intellect, but as much or more in his subconscious self or soul, with its half-dumb instincts and feelings, out of which his intelligence springs.

I would venture to put this in a more individual way to any Englishman who shrinks, as most Englishmen do, from the very idea of laying aside his critical faculty, even for a time, and simply receiving a message as divine.

What we Englishmen need, above other men, is not merely 'honest thinking,' and 'obedience to our consciences,' but the enrichment of our souls, so that we may have both a larger basis for thinking and a deeper and fuller vision of duty. Now it was just this enrichment of soul —of the whole basis

of personality—that seems to have resulted in the first Christians from their simple receptiveness. It was because their heart and imagination had been thus enriched that so vigorous an intellectual as well as moral outgrowth was apparent. A similar enrichment, with a similar outgrowth, would always be, and would be for us to-day, the result of a similar receptiveness.

I can imagine nothing so fertilizing to the intellect of an Englishman (apart from all other considerations) as for him to lay aside his critical attitude for a time, and simply put himself, as it were, to school to receive and assimilate the message of the faith from some adequate teacher, whether by the written or spoken word. Thus he would really appreciate and understand the meaning of our religion from within. If he should still find it inconsistent with what on other grounds he knows to be true or possible, his rejection of it, or doubt about it, would be at least the rejection or the doubtful holding of a faith which had been appreciated, as it can only be appreciated, from within. I am persuaded that what renders our English race comparatively and generally unintellectual,

is not too much credulity, but too little receptiveness.

This is, then, what I meant by the method of the old and catholic religion. It proclaims a message of God, a self-disclosure of God in the person of Jesus Christ, adequate to satisfy the religious needs of men for all time; which by all men alike must first of all be received as the word of God, in faith: so that all men, learned or unlearned, are thus first of all put on a level, as simple receivers in faith of the divine response to human need. And I put this method of the old religion in contrast to the method of the new theology, which approaches us as the best product of contemporary thought, trying to frame an expression of religious ideas which shall be most acceptable to the intellectual aspirations of the moment.

I am occupied now in describing the principle of the catholic religion, rather than in giving its justification. But the description I have given of the method of religious revelation may suggest one particular objection which it may be well to meet.

It may be suggested that this supposed

'divine response' is really nothing else than the reflection of human desires. It was because men felt the weakness and bitterness of their lot, because they cried out in pain to the God of their imagining, 'Wherefore hast thou made all men for naught?' that, unable to bear the 'vanity' of human life, they conceived false hopes, and invested mere surmisings with the dignity of divine oracles, and finally came to find a revelation of God in what was no more than a great and good man's life and death. The supposed divine revelation is no more than the echo of the human cry.

Now to this the reply is twofold: First, that it is impossible to treat so vast an aspiration and effort as the religious aspiration and effort of man has been in human history, as if it carried with it no ground for a belief that it would be satisfied. On a smaller scale, indeed, we can recognize 'the vanity of human wishes'; but the most permanent and universal tendencies of humanity represent man's fundamental nature. Such a tendency in humanity is the search after God—the feeling after Him, to find Him. It is, then, we must say, man's nature to require God. He strives

restlessly after Him. 'Unquiet is the heart of man until he rest in Him.' He expends infinite pains over long ages and in all lands in the search for God. If, then, there is any order or rational purpose in the world, we cannot conceive of so fundamental and universal a striving and straining without some real object to stimulate and satisfy it. In some such general sense as this, we cannot help arguing from desire to satisfaction. But—this is the second part of my reply—the response to human need which claims to be divine, the message of God, does not for a moment allow of our supposing that it is the reflection of human need. It has indeed been such as to satisfy human need at its best, but not by any means such as men would have desired or imagined for themselves. The prophets of the Old Testament who are the organs of the word of God, are plainly supplying not what men actually wanted, but what they ought to have wanted. When to the prophets succeeded the Son, so little did the mass of men want His message, that they rejected and crucified Him. All the wide and persistent degradations of which the religion which we claim to have been revealed has

been in history the subject, from Pharisaism downwards, have been due to its being accommodated to suit human instincts and wants, just as they were, without causing men too much trouble. And in virtue of such accommodation the religion has lost its moral power. This is one of the most impressive features of the revealed religion. It is indeed a profound response to the experienced human need where it is deepest, most genuine, and most disciplined ; but it is very far from being the kind of response which mankind, on the whole, would have desired ; and it is, therefore, in vain to argue that it can be the product of the human imagination, which in fact it has had to meet continually with rebuke and chastisement.

. . . . .

But to the human need of God, at its best and deepest, the permanent divine response was, we claim, given once for all in the Son of God, Jesus Christ, in whom God is revealed in manhood, and manhood revealed in perfect union with Godhead.

Of this revelation, the best and most authoritative summary statement is given in the great catholic creeds, the Apostles'

and Nicene Creeds, as they are commonly called. The Apostles' Creed, in its earlier form—which does not differ in any important respect from its present form—is the expression given in the earlier part of the second century to the faith of the Church, for the instruction of those who were to confess the faith in baptism. In the Nicene Creed you have a similar baptismal creed, somewhat expanded, especially by the insertion of the famous clause which proclaims Christ 'of one substance with the Father,' that is, really and truly divine. It happened in the earlier part of the fourth century that a prominent Alexandrian teacher, Arius, endeavoured to introduce into Christianity the idea of a demi-god, an intermediate being between God and His creatures. That is to say, he represented Christ as 'divine,' as God's agent in creation and redemption, and as a being to be worshipped, but as Himself fundamentally a creature, and not God. The Christian church determined to protect itself against so fundamental an outrage upon the faith which Christians had entertained from the first about their Redeemer, and from so manifest a relapse into pagan ways of thinking, and it adopted

this protective phrase, 'of one substance with the Father,' into its creed.

These creeds, then, I propose to take as the classical expression of the catholic religion, having supreme authority among Christian statements of our faith. When I say that they have supreme authority to represent the Christian church and Christianity I am not speaking of the authority of councils, or of ecclesiastical officers who may have imposed them, but I am speaking of a deeper and more fundamental sort of authority—the authority of the whole Christian body. There is in those creeds the whole mind of Christendom. Before the Reformation and after there have been various schools of thought in Christendom, and great differences of opinion and sharp controversies, and permanent divisions, but I think we may say that practically whatever has been nobly suffered or worthily done in the name of Christ throughout the ages, has been done in the name of that faith in God, three in one, and in the incarnation of the eternal Son, which you find confessed in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. You know the famous phrase, *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*—

that which has been held always, everywhere, and by all within Christendom.[1] If that phrase applies to anything, it applies to what is contained in those creeds; and I take them as my standards of faith in the old or catholic religion.

[1] As interpreted by its author, Vincent of Lerins, it means what has been believed among Christians *from apostolic days*, as opposed to what originated at a later date; and *in all parts of the church*, so that what did not hold it fell away from the church or was excluded; and as *the common faith*, as opposed to the speculations of individuals. So understood, the canon represents something most real and valuable.

LECTURE III

THE IMMANENCE OF GOD

Now I am to contrast the teaching of the New Theology with the teaching of the old religion in certain crucial points, which were enumerated above,[1] and on which the New Theology lays special stress. Of these the first is the doctrine of the immanence of God—of God as disclosed not otherwise than within nature and within man.

God, says the New Theology, is 'the self of the universe,' and He is 'my deeper self and yours.'[2] 'God is the mysterious power which is finding expression in the universe and which is present in every tiniest atom of the wondrous whole. I find that this power is the one reality I cannot get away from; for, whatever else it may be, it is myself.'[3] 'The real God is the God

[1] pp. 9, 10. [2] *The New Theology*, p. 35. [3] ibid., p. 18.

expressed in the universe, and in yourself.' [1] The higher self of each man, which is also the higher self of all other men, the unity of humanity, is 'in all probability a perfect and eternal spiritual being integral to the being of God' [2] There is no 'dividing line between our being and God's.' [3] We are of one substance with God. This position is maintained more unreservedly by Mr. Campbell than by Sir Oliver Lodge. He too tells us that 'we are a part of the universe and the universe is a part of God.' [4] He too speaks of 'the humanity of God and the divinity of man'; he too implies that each man should be able to say, with Jesus, 'I and my Father are one.' But he seems to leave more room than Mr. Campbell does for the thought of God as self-complete and beyond and above the universe.

We may say, however, without any risk of mistake, that the tendency of the New Theology is to bring into exclusive emphasis the idea of the immanent God, of God in nature. Nature is one, and one uni-

[1] ibid., p. 20. [2] ibid., p. 31. [3] ibid., p. 34.
[4] *Substance of Faith*, p. 43, and *Hibbert Journal*, Apr. 1906, p. 53.

versal Spirit pervades it: this is God. Nature is His expression: and man's soul is a conscious spark of the universal God.

Now it is not too much to say that this is not new theology, but very old theology. When Christianity came into the world it found the civilized world full of a religious philosophy, in part Platonic, in part Stoic, which held a doctrine substantially identical with that of the New Theology.[1] We cannot be at all acquainted with the thought of the first and second centuries without realizing that this was the current religious belief of the educated world. For if modern science has given us a much more exact perception of the methods and laws of nature, it can hardly give us a sense of the unity of nature and of the all-pervading Spirit more intense than the ancients had. This

> Sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean, and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
> A motion and a spirit that impels

[1] See *The New Stoicism*, by Professor Sonnenshein (*Hibbert Journal*, Apr. 1907).

All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things —

is in every age the fruit alike of philosophic search and of mystical contemplation. Moreover, leaving out of the question for the moment the tendency to identify man's spirit with this omnipresent God, the creed of God's immanence in all things is true, and, as we shall see, the Christian religion identified itself with it and propagated it. But for the Christian it was not the first or most important part of his faith in God.

For there came into the world where this philosophic creed prevailed, amidst a hundred lower forms of faith and worship, another thought of God, due not to Greeks but to Jews. And the result of our consideration will, I hope, be to convince us that 'salvation'—the saving and redeeming knowledge of God, 'is of the Jews.' To the Greeks was given the leadership among men in the world of philosophy and the pursuit of beauty, as to the Romans in the world of government and law; but the Jewish race was called to be, by its prophets, 'the sacred school of the know-

ledge of God and of the spiritual life for all mankind.' [1]

Not by the way of philosophical contemplation and inquiry, but by a way which we call 'inspiration,' there was given to the Jewish prophets, through their moral conscience, the sense of God as the righteous sovereign Lord. He was indeed the God of nature, the creator and sustainer of all that is, having all power and might; but, above all, they recognized Him as the eternally Righteous One, who had made men to serve Him in righteousness and holiness, and sat supreme above them, their maker and their judge. This doctrine of

[1] The phrase is St. Athanasius's. A modern writer, the great Ewald, in sketching the programme of his *History of Israel*, observes how ancient nations devoted themselves to special branches of human attainment; and how in Israel 'the aim is perfect religion. The aim was lofty enough to concentrate the efforts of a whole people for more than a thousand years, and however much the mode of pursuit might vary, it was this single object that was always pursued; so that there is hardly any history of equal compass that possesses in all its phases and variations so much intrinsic unity, and is so closely bound up to a single thought pertinaciously held, but always developing itself to a higher purity.' The Jew however was, throughout his history, conscious that he was not discovering God by investigation, but receiving His disclosure of Himself.

the moral character of God—His essential righteousness—is the central idea of the Old Testament. The sense of it bowed men down in utter humility, and made quite impossible any identification of themselves with God. It forced them to think of God as the absolute creator, alone self-existent alone the object of worship; though they knew that He loved the creatures whom He had made, and admitted men, with cleansed hearts and reverent minds, into fellowship and communion with Himself.

This Jewish thought of God it was which, in its perfect form, found expression through the lips of Jesus Christ. All modern critics of the New Testament see in our Lord the inheritor of the Jewish way of thinking about God, though in His teaching the thought of God, as lord and creator, finds its completion in the thought of Him as father, and the idea of His righteousness in the idea of His love. The disciples of Christ did indeed, through His life and teaching, come to believe that in His person God had come to them in a human nature, and they believed in Him as God's eternal Son made man. But there was not even the slightest tendency to

transfer the thought of His deity to themselves, or any other man. No breath of pantheistic identification of Godhead and manhood is felt in the New Testament. Once more, through Christ's teaching and His promises, and through the performance of His promises, they came to believe in the Spirit of God, who was to come and take men up into the most intimate fellowship with God. But, again, there was not any real tendency to confuse the divine Spirit with the human nature. Rather the thought of God, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, yet one God, helped the Christian church to maintain the Jewish idea of God as perfect and complete in Himself—as indeed loving to create and to have fellowship with His creatures, but as Himself in His own being perfect, and dependent in nothing upon the work of His hands.

This is simply an historical statement of the religious heritage which we owe to the Jews. Granted this belief in God, personal and sovereign and complete in Himself, all the truth of His immanence could be accepted without risk of confusion between the creator and the creature. Already in the Psalms it is recognized that God is

active in nature, that His 'breath' is the life of nature.[1] And in St. Paul's teaching there is the fullest recognition that 'in God we (men) live, and move, and are,' and 'that in him all things consist,' or 'have their coherence.' And this idea of God's immanence which, as we have seen, was prevalent in the world into which Christianity came, was taken up most fully into Christian theology, and held its place both among the Fathers and later among the Schoolmen. It would be hard to exaggerate the constancy with which they recognize God as active in the world—its beauty, its order, its system, its 'persistent energy,' the force of nature, and the light of conscience; but never for a moment so as to obliterate or obscure the primary belief in God as alone self-existent and independent and supreme, the creator and lord and judge of all.

This perception of the absolute difference between the creator and the creature came into prominence through the Arian controversy—already briefly described. In Arius's conception Christ was, as it were, a demi-god: himself a creature, but supreme over all other creatures, and indeed their

[1] Ps. civ. 29, 30.

creator: a being, therefore, both creature and creator. This conception the Christian church absolutely refused. Absolutely, as by an indomitable instinct, it refused to worship or treat as God one who was himself created. The highest archangel, the most exalted creature conceivable, the Christian church felt would be no nearer being God, than the meanest of men. Between God, the self-existent, and any created being, the difference was proclaimed to be absolute. And if Christ was to be worshipped, as assuredly He was, it was because He was, what no created person could conceivably be, 'of one substance with God.' [1]

Of course the Christian conception of God leaves us with many mysteries baffling our eager scrutiny. The relation of God's all-embracing being and personality to the dependent and created personalities of men remains profoundly mysterious. [2] It

[1] See for instance, Athanasius, *Orat. c. Arian.* ii. 20, and cf. Mozley's *Theory of Development* (Rivington, 1878), pp. 74–81.

[2] I cannot think that Dr. Rashdall's recent book (*Theory of Good and Evil*, ii. 238) is on the true line of solution. In some sense God's being must surely be all-including, and identified with the Absolute.

is only one of many mysteries. The early Christian church, living and struggling to express and defend its doctrine, in an age of keen intellectual and philosophical speculation, felt the burden of the mystery, and the inadequacy of human thought to solve or words to express it. But what they believed and relied upon was, they felt, not a human speculation, but a real intelligible self-disclosure of God, made in many parts and manners, but made finally in the person of His Son. His Name, the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, one God, creator, redeemer and sanctifier, saviour and judge, was lifted above all doubt and controversy: for He had revealed it and they had accepted it, and found its power in their whole being.

To go back, then, from this Christian heritage upon the mere idea of divine immanence as the Stoics had conceived it, is, I contend, to go backward, not forward. The superiority of the Christian idea of God may be stated in three ways.

First in its moral effect. The pantheistic or philosophic conception of God as the universal being of whose substance we all

form a part, of whom we know nothing except his expression of Himself in nature, is destitute of moral power. It leads to a kind of moral indifferency. Physical nature is apparently altogether indifferent to moral distinctions. It can be explained indeed as the handiwork of the good God, and as representing a stage in His self-revealing and educative purpose, if *once we have got from somewhere beyond nature the disclosure of His person and character.* But if we are left to draw conclusions from nature we shall arrive at no clear conception of divine righteousness ; and if we include human nature, we shall still be bewildered by the strange mixture of good and evil, which seem to wage an uncertain struggle, or, very often, a struggle in which the good appears to be defeated. If manhood be identical with godhead, we must ask, is God more good than bad ? or is He becoming better as the generations pass ? And if the human spirit be only an element in the All which is God, is it the element which is dominant ? Or will it not rather be swallowed up in the sea of non-moral forces which is, to all appearance, so much vaster than humanity ?

Till, I say, we have got our disclosure from beyond nature, and beyond man, we have got no ground for the worship of an absolutely righteous God, or for the sense of responsibility; or for the striving after purity and love. In history, the philosophic pantheism, such as prevailed in the world into which Christianity came, has shown itself, as we should indeed expect, without the power to arouse and inspire and maintain moral effort and moral enthusiasm in the mass of men. It leaves men content to feel themselves as part of the whole. The moral lift and enthusiasm and hope which Christianity brought into the Greek and Roman world came with the Hebrew belief in the righteous God, who, however much He loves men and however closely He calls them into union with Himself, is yet in His own being independent and supreme and unalterable; our creator and our judge; our saviour also—but a saviour whose fellowship we can only attain by purifying ourselves even as He is pure. I can conceive nothing more certain than that with us to-day the morality of the future depends on our holding fast the Christian belief in God, and

refusing to relapse upon the philosophic pantheism.

Secondly, the superiority of the Christian belief in God lies in the method by which it was received. There is a memorable passage in the *Phaedo* of Plato, in which Socrates is represented as expressing his dissatisfaction with the arguments by which he and his friends had been endeavouring to prove the immortality of the soul. 'And yet,' he says, ' I should deem him a coward who did not prove what is said to the uttermost. For he should persevere until he has attained one of two things : either he should discern or learn the truth ; or if this is impossible, I would have him take the best and most irrefragable of human words (arguments), and let this be the raft upon which he sails through life—not without risk, as I admit, if he cannot find some word of God which will more safely and surely carry him.'

It is such a word of God, giving a different kind of security to our religious beliefs from that which speculation could ever attain—a security such as attaches itself to our feelings of right and wrong—it is such a word of God

which we believe to have been really uttered.

The Hebrew prophets knew themselves to be its subjects and its organs. Through many generations of inspired men, there was impressed upon a whole nation a profound belief that God had really disclosed Himself and His character to them. This faith received its fulfilment, and was made universal, through Jesus Christ. Thus there has been communicated to men a certain conception of God not due to fallible speculation, but to God's own will to reveal Himself. This message may, nay must, become the subject for philosophical speculation, and the intellect of men must use the conception of God thus received to interpret the world and harmonize the whole of experience. But the revelation itself is given in forms of human speech, and, at least as truly, in forms of human life, such as are intelligible to the hearts of ordinary men. Thus it becomes, not the doctrine of a school of thinkers, but the creed of a catholic church, the faith in the one God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And if in any sense there be a God whom we can rightly call

our Father, and whose sons we are, then, I say, this method of self-disclosure or revelation corresponds to the idea of His Fatherhood, and is of a piece with the whole experience of mankind as to the method by which moral and spiritual truth, as opposed to the truth about nature, has made itself known among men.

Lastly, the Christian idea of God justifies itself to the intellect by its comprehensiveness ; by enabling us to make our own all the truth of the divine immanence without the moral disadvantages which belong to the conception of God as the soul of nature, when we have that and nothing more.

The Christian conception of God in fact holds a middle point between Deism, against which the New Theology is in somewhat violent reaction, and Pantheism, into which in its reaction it undoubtedly plunges. The New Theology is in reaction against what it describes as ' the old idea of God '— as if He were some great emperor who sits somewhere outside and above the world, who made it and set it going and occasionally intervenes to set it right again. This, which has been well called ' the carpenter idea ' of God, is in fact not the

old idea, if by that is meant the orthodox or scriptural idea. It is a gross distortion of it. Deism, which is the best form in which this one-sided conception of God took shape, was a theory of a certain school of thinkers in the eighteenth century, but certainly not the conception of Christian theology. For the Christian, God is in the world in all its parts and at every moment, revealing Himself in varying degrees in all its force, and order, and beauty, and truth, and goodness. But the universe does not exhaust Him or limit Him. Beyond the universe and independent of it, He is in Himself, limited by nothing outside Himself,[1] in the eternal fellowship of His own being. He is *in* all, but also *over* all, supreme and free. Thus it is not true that 'all is God:' for this is to identify His being with that of His creatures, which our own self-consciousness, to go no further, prohibits. It is not true that 'God is all:' for that is to suggest that he has no being independent of and beyond the world. But

[1] It is often said, and may be truly said, that God is infinite, or 'unlimited.' But it is more exact to say that God is self-limited: limited by nothing except the eternal law and character of His own being.

it is true that 'from him' and 'in him' and 'unto him' are all things; that He is the creator of all things, who has made man especially in His own image; and the sustaining life of all things, who invites man into most intimate communion and correspondence with Himself; and the end towards whom all things tend, the moral judge of all free and conscious beings.

I do not suppose that the teachers of the New Theology who proclaim a 'human God' are in a position to object to the doctrine of the creed as 'anthropomorphism,' that is, as imagining a God in the likeness of man. The fact is that whatever man thinks or imagines he must think or imagine 'anthropomorphically,' for he can think only human thoughts. It follows that if human thoughts are necessarily limited and imperfect, the highest thought that man can think of God is inadequate to its subject. The Christian Fathers, in deepest reverence, were never weary of reiterating that we but know God as in an inadequate reflection, seeing 'as in a mirror, darkly.' But the point is that human nature is at least a truer image of God than mechanical forces or merely animal life. For man pre-emi-

nently is made 'in God's image.' If God is not in man's image (anthropomorphic), man, with his spiritual and free personality, is in God's image (theomorphic). Thus in Jesus Christ the best that we can know or believe about God is revealed in a human character; and the human relationship of father and son is the best image of the eternal fellowship which is God's own being.

LECTURE IV

THE IDEA OF SIN[1]

THE view of sin which the New Theology presents follows from its idea of God. God is the mysterious power which is finding expression in the universe and in mankind as part of the whole. And the process in which God thus realizes Himself in the universe is a process of gradual evolution or upward development. In this process sin has appeared. Its existence—in forms of lust and greed and hatred and cruelty and falsehood—cannot be denied, nor its ugliness and hatefulness. But is it, we ask, voluntary and therefore culpable? There is no doubt that Sir Oliver Lodge would say that it is, though he does not seem to me to follow out this admission to its consequences. And, with much less clearness and emphasis, Mr. Campbell appears

[1] This subject is treated, from a more hortatory point of view, in Sermon iii, p. 231.

to recognize that sin is in some measure voluntary and culpable. We have, he admits, to 'mourn over our own slowness in getting into line with the cosmic purpose.' Sin is being 'false to ourselves and our divine origin.' [1] But though we have thus a certain power to retard the process of advance in ourselves and the world, we cannot do more than retard it. It goes forward inevitably. Sin is only a phase which is being outgrown and left behind. It is 'a mistake,' [2] akin to the mistakes we make in every department of human progress. It is an ignorant quest for true life and for God.[3] Through all our mistakes, the upward process goes on. 'Slowly, very slowly, the race is climbing the steep ascent.' And in every individual man the true life must finally be realized.' [4]

And what is sin? Its essence is selfishness, we are told. It is seeking our own personal and separate interest or pleasure instead of the whole. And the explanation of this mistaken tendency lies in the animal nature out of which we have been developed. It is 'the tiger and the ape' in us. Selfish-

[1] *The New Theology*, pp. 66, 109. [2] ibid., p. 214.
[3] ibid., pp. 52, 153 f., 160 ff. [4] ibid., pp. 215–16.

ness, injustice, and cruelty are 'relics of our brute ancestry' which civilization is slowly refining away.[1]

Such a theory finds itself in conflict with the common Christian idea of an original fall of man. Thus the only real fall which Mr. Campbell can recognize appears on examination to be a fall, not of man, but of God. 'The coming of a finite creature into being is itself of the nature of a fall—a coming down from perfection to imperfection.'[2] The idea is that 'the universal life'—that is God—in order to realize itself in the universe, must submit to limitation in finite forms of life. This is, of course, only 'a fall' in the sense that the deep humiliation of the incarnation, as St. Paul conceives it, might be called a fall. It has nothing to do with the Christian idea of a fall of man by wilful disobedience. In man, then, there was no original fall: unless we can give this name to the passage from a brute life, unconscious of moral distinctions, to the spiritual consciousness of right and wrong. In becoming conscious of moral possibility and moral freedom man became conscious of a lower self of animal impulse

[1] *The New Theology*, pp. 61–2. [2] ibid., p. 66.

which had to be overcome ; and in this consciousness of contrast between his gross actual nature and actual habits, and the idea of what he ought to be and may become, originates, it is supposed, the idea of 'the fall.' That is to say, the soul, conscious of a divine parentage and destiny, finds the unspiritual bodily nature a prison-house and a degradation. But this fall was no fault of man. 'The perception of evil is the concomitant of your expanding finite consciousness of good.'[1] It is indeed plainly no real fall, but a step upwards. 'It has no sinister antecedents. Its purpose is good.'[2] It 'is but a statement of imperfection,' and thus 'is not man's fault but God's will, and is a means towards a great end.' From this way of conceiving 'the fall' and from all the accompanying view of sin, it will follow naturally that Mr. Campbell cannot tolerate the idea of God's wrath upon sin, or of God punishing sin, or indeed of God as the judge of men, judging, as it were, from outside.

God is to be sought in myself. He is realizing Himself through me. If mistakes are made in this process of realizing God,

[1] ibid., p. 45. [2] ibid., p. 66.

there is no other punishment than such as a man thereby inevitably makes for himself, such as is involved in the process of recovery, and there is no other wrath or judgement than of his own self-condemnation, the judgement of his own higher self which is indeed divine, and which must finally win the victory and realize itself in every single life.[1]

Now it may be questioned whether this view of sin is clearly thought out ; whether, in particular, the question of voluntariness is really faced in the light of its consequences. But in its general lines it presents an intelligible attitude towards sin, and one which we recognize as thoroughly modern : it permeates, one may say, most of the popular novel literature of the day. At the same time we shall probably feel that, as leading us to think of sin as a weakness or an error, pitiable before it is, and much more than it is, blameworthy, and as leaving very little place for indignation against sin, and none for the conception of sin as leading in the individual to ultimate and irretrievable disorder, it falls very far short of the teaching of the Bible.

[1] *The New Theology*, pp. 213 ff.

The Old Testament is quite full of the idea of sin as rebellion. God, who made man, made him, unlike His other creatures in this world, capable of voluntary and glad obedience; and mankind has proved rebellious; and this rebellion merits the righteous wrath of God, and brings down His judgement on nations and individuals; and the true attitude of man, when he has 'come to himself,' is one of profound penitence and earnest amendment and willing acceptance of the divine punishment, now truly remedial. This, beyond all question, is the prevailing way of regarding the actual state of man in the Old Testament. And the essence of this view of sin is that it lies, not in the bodily nature, but in the will. It is rebellion, the rebellion of the will of man against the righteous God.

Certain limitations which are to be found in the Old Testament doctrine disappear in the New. In particular the area in which God is thought of as dealing with man is definitely and finally extended beyond this present life, and the much fuller conception of the redemptive love of God gives a different colour to the thought of God's

attitude towards sin. But in this, as in other respects, it is upon the Old Testament doctrine that the New Testament is built; and the idea of sin is the same. Our Lord is indeed mainly occupied in directing the minds of His disciples and hearers to positive ideals. He is announcing the moral character of the kingdom of God. But His first call to men reiterated John the Baptist's claim for repentance. 'Repent ye'—that is the beginning.[1] And consistently He deals with men as needing a fundamental change and fundamental renewal: 'Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven,' 'Except a man be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'[2] Speaking to His disciples, and speaking about man's natural goodness, He sees in it the taint of sin: 'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father . . . .'[3] Quite uncompromisingly he warns men of the possibility of eternal or irremediable punishment for

[1] Matt. iv. 17; Mark i. 15.
[2] Matt. xviii. 3, John iii. 3.
[3] Matt. vii. 11, Luke xi. 13, cf. xiii. 1–8.

sin, coming from the divine righteousness,[1] and speaks of a certain act or state of wilful sin itself as 'having never forgiveness,' and as eternal.[2] Certainly it is the case that Jesus Christ gives no countenance at all to views of sin which lead us to think of it as a temporary error on the right way, But probably the most noticeable point about our Lord's attitude towards sin is that His indignation, which is as fiery as the indignation of the old prophets, is mainly directed, not against sensual, but against spiritual sin. It is against sin of the kind which we should describe as least bodily, and having least to do with our animal ancestors, that He concentrates His wrath. It is against pride, and calculated worldliness, and spiritual despotism, and ambition, and love of power, against the sins of respectable spiritual men, rather than against the sins of ungoverned passion and animal lust. With the utmost emphasis, therefore, we should say that the teaching of Jesus Christ leaves us with a profoundly deepened assurance that the seat of sin lies in the will of man; and that

[1] Matt. x. 28, xxv. 46, Mark ix. 43, 48.

[2] Mark iii. 29, Matt. xii. 32, Luke xii. 10.

we are, in any true view of human nature, face to face with this awful possibility and reality of the human will setting itself in obstinate rebellion against the will of God.

Nor is it open to doubt that to our Lord's spiritual perception (as to that of St. Paul and St. John), the spectacle of human sin was thrown upon the larger background of an unseen world of spirits. Human rebellion was a portion of a larger and wider rebellion of 'principalities and powers,' the devil and his angels. As God is, and remains, the only Lord, so the victory over evil is sure. But meanwhile man's moral trial is made all the more serious by the opposition of unseen enemies, and his rebellion all the more serious by his unseen allies.

St. John formulates his theory of sin in the words, 'Sin is lawlessness.' [1] He means by lawlessness, not, as we might mean, merely something anomalous: but simply rebellion against the law of God. He means that the two phrases are coincident: that sin begins and ends with violation of God's

[1] 1 John iii. 4: ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία. The use of the articles makes the two terms absolutely co-extensive.

law, and that except in the rebellion of created spirits there is no such thing as violation of God's law. And in thus making the will the seat of sin, and identifying sin with rebellion, St. John is but formulating the general view of the Bible. It is also St. Paul's doctrine: 'The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold down the truth in unrighteousness'; 'upon them that are factious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, shall be wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that worketh evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek'; 'who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might.'[1] It is needless to go on multiplying quotations.

It has, however, been said that, for St. Paul, the seat of sin is in the bodily nature, 'the flesh,' and that he regards it as almost involuntary: 'I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but to do that which is good is not.' Thus 'it is no more I that do the evil, but sin which dwelleth

[1] Rom. i. 18, ii. 8, 9; 2 Thess. i. 9.

in me.' 'Not what I would that do I practise; but what I hate, that I do.' 'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?'[1] But closer examination proves this not to be the case. St. Paul perceives that the misdirection of the human will has perverted the body, so that the body of man has become accustomed to evil, impregnated with evil. And even when the will has become wholly right with God—for that is the case which he is here contemplating—there still remains an intractable nature which the man's will cannot draw with it or control, and which forces the man to feel his need of divine grace to transform him and purge him through and through.

This intractable nature is sin in the body and bodily impulses; but this is, in St. Paul, the secondary and not the primary meaning of sin. It comes into notice when sin, in its primary meaning of rebellion of the will, is over and gone. It is, in the individual or in the race, a consequence of this rebellion. And it remains true that the real seat and origin of sin, according to St. Paul, is the will; and there is no bodily

[1] Rom. vii. 15–24.

sin, however gross, which is ultimately anything else than the misuse of a physical nature essentially good by a perverted will.

And St. Paul's whole teaching emphasizes the principle of justification by faith; and this principle does indeed mean, at bottom, nothing else than this: that when the will is again set right and enlightened, and wholly redirected towards God and open to God's offer of love, then the whole nature will be redressed and brought right. Redemption begun in the will, by faith in God and Jesus Christ, draws with it the whole nature, body, soul, and spirit, each to its really natural order and harmony.[1]

Christianity, indeed, if it be true to facts, must recognize all that St. Paul says about 'sin in the members'; but the ultimate seat of sin is not the body, but the will, and sin is only really sinful so far as it is the rebellion of the personal will against God.

This is the fundamental Christian doctrine. It is not stated in the creeds, though it is implied in the phrases 'I believe in the forgiveness of sins,' or 'in one baptism

[1] I have dealt with this matter at greater length in my *Practical Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans* (Murray), i. 66 ff., 245 ff., 279.

for the remission of sins,' and 'who *for our salvation* became man,' for these phrases imply that every man lies in sin and needs forgiveness and renewal. But it is found throughout Scripture, and, speaking generally, throughout Christian theology. Tertullian, who may be said to have been the first Christian psychologist, is right in fastening upon this as the distinctive Christian principle of sin.[1] And if it be true, it is obvious that sin is not anything which civilization has a tendency to outgrow. The exhibitions of sin are different in different stages of civilization—different among barbarians and in highly advanced races. But it is as much present in the latter as the former. And throughout the whole history of humanity it is in the same sense destructive in its tendency. Huxley speaks of 'that fixed order of nature which sends social disorganization upon the track of immorality, as surely as it sends physical disease after physical trespasses,' and he speaks of its being 'the high mission' of science 'to be the preacher of a firm and living faith' in that 'fixed moral order.'[2]

[1] *De paen.* 3.

[2] *Evolution and Ethics* (Macmillan), p. 146.

Substitute for the words 'fixed order' some such phrase as 'the will of God, the moral ruler of the world,' and you have here the doctrine of the prophets about 'the day of the Lord'—the judgement of God upon nations and individuals. History, so far as it is able to pass a verdict upon the causes of national disintegration, confirms the prophets' teaching. As you look out upon the extraordinarily chequered course of human progress, you cannot resist the impression that progress might have been infinitely more continuous and more general but for the persistent tendency in men to follow their lusts and appetites and selfish ambitions instead of conforming themselves to the will of God, as they were able to know it. The history of the race is in fact only the history of the individual 'writ large,' and we know well enough what sin is in ourselves and others; how indisputable is the fact of wilfulness, and the refusal of the divine law which claims authority over us in our conscience, and the degradation and misery which this wilfulness works in us.

So far as we can trace the history of man, from end to end of our knowledge,

sin is always there, in the form of man's refusal to submit himself to his best lights ; and it is there on the largest scale, and always with the same ruinous results, in the individual and in the race.

It is of course obvious, from any point of view, that the individual man is, from his birth and before it, deeply influenced by the race. It is obvious that the individual does not 'start fair'—that he is largely what the circumstances of his birth and nurture make him. Thus it is certainly true in some sense that sin is in the race before it is in the individual will, and that every individual is born into an inheritance of sin. Whether this inheritance of sin is actually transmitted physically or whether it is, in the deepest sense, the result of environment and the social influences which are upon us from our infancy, we need not now consider. The relation of the individual man to humanity, and the manner in which the effects of the individual's action are transmitted in the race, is a very obscure question. I am not now concerned with it. In any case, whether by physical transmission or by social influence, each individual is born into a world of sin, and

finds his own nature more or less weakened and tainted before his own personal responsibility begins. But it will be admitted by all Christians, except a school of extreme Calvinists which can hardly any longer be said to exist, that this 'taint of nature' does not reach to the point of annihilating our moral freedom and responsibility; and that where the will is set right the whole nature will ultimately follow.

All that I am now concerned to maintain as the indisputably Christian principle, the constant teaching of the Bible, is that the whole strength and essence of sin lies in the lawlessness of the will, and that it is this, and nothing else than this, which has weakened and depraved our humanity, and been the main retarding and disintegrating force in human development.

Sin, then, as we know it by experience in the individual, is always a fall, a loss and not a gain. It is 'lawlessness,' and to break the law of our being is never a gain. The returned prodigal, for all the joy of his recovery, can never do otherwise than lament that he left his father's house. The act of rebellion is always a step along the road which leads to the state of which our

Lord said, 'Good were it for that man if he had not been born'—a step, though mercifully not an irrecoverable step, along the way to ruin. And when you look at humanity in the large (so far as his origin can be known or conjectured) from his first beginnings of properly human consciousness, sin has been always a fall, and at every stage has made, as the individual, so also the society to which he belongs, weaker and poorer and less progressive than might have been the case.

And this doctrine of sin is in no way dependent upon our regarding the story of Genesis iii. as an historical record. In the early Christian centuries it was commonly regarded as giving us, not a literal history, but, to use the illuminating phrase of St. Gregory of Nyssa, 'ideas (or 'doctrines') in the form of a narrative.'[1] The materials of the narrative come from sources shared by the Jews with the Babylonians and other races. But amongst the Jews the story becomes the vehicle for a teaching about the meaning of

[1] *Oratio Catechetica*, 5: ἐν διηγήσεως εἴδει δόγματα ἡμῖν προτιθέμενος. The phrase refers to the whole opening narrative of the creation and the fall.

sin which, conveyed in a form intelligible to children or childish races, is, in its moral contents, for ever true and valuable. It is, as a matter of fact, quite untrue to say that the Old Testament doctrine of sin, which the New Testament inherits, is built upon this narrative. It has no appreciable effect upon the rest of the Old Testament. In fact the doctrine of sin was wrought out in the moral experience of the Hebrews, under the guidance of the prophetic spirit, and the colouring given to the old story was the result of their moral insight into the meaning of sin, and not the source of it.[1]

The great advantage of the Christian view of sin lies in its moral effects. Let all men know the love of God for them individually, and the freedom of which their nature is capable; let them know that only one thing keeps them back from entering upon their glorious heritage, and that is the false desire of independence, the shrinking from God, the refusal of the will to surrender itself to Him, and you

[1] With St. Paul's doctrine of the fall, and of the unity of humanity in Adam and Christ, and of the relation of sin and death, I have dealt in the work referred to, *Romans* i., 190 ff., and app. note E.

inspire men with a great hope. You have an effective gospel. The most degraded of men can be assured that, if he will only surrender himself in faith to God, and accept the divine promise as it is assured to him in Christ, and open his heart to the divine influence, he can break once for all with the past; his nature will be, there and then, brought back upon the track of recovery; he will regain self-mastery. All the effects of sin, in the habits of his own body or the traditions of his family or class or nation or race, will be at last overcome by the power of the redemptive Spirit. This may happen—as the experience of conversions has constantly shown—with amazing rapidity, or it may be a slow process only begun in this life; but the victory, slow or rapid, lies in the will—in the act of faith by which the whole life is brought again into subjection to God in Christ.

On the other hand, the more you allow men to believe that the fault lies in their bodies—in an animal ancestry, imperfectly refined, the more certainly you encourage in them (what is the root delusion) the tendency to regard their sins as their mis-

fortunes, the inevitable result of their circumstances and their natures. This is no mere theory. It is rooted upon the experience of the past. The tendency to find the secret of sin in the defilements of matter and animal life has prevailed in many ages and many parts of the world. It was the dominant idea when Christianity came into the world. It has at times resulted in an extreme asceticism which has had for its motive the desire to live a spiritual life, separate from the pollutions of the body. But, after all, we cannot live separate from the body ; and if the body is evil we cannot help it. Thus the tendency to find the secret of sin in the bodily nature has in fact resulted in general in a moral apathy—an acquiescence in the life of passion and impulse. A great part of the redemptive power which Christianity confessedly exercised, when it came into a world where this false idea prevailed, lay in its giving men the true secret of sin.

Again, the Christian teaching about sin, as it appears in the New Testament and in the Church generally, forces a man to feel that there is no limit to the disaster which, by his refusal of God and of duty, he may

bring upon himself. Without allowing ourselves to close any possibly open question, we may say with confidence that the teaching of Christ holds over the man who persists in rebellious self-will the certainty of a ruin which may prove at last final and irretrievable. I do not think it is possible to doubt that Christ did hold this ultimate possibility over men—in metaphorical words no doubt, but in its unrelieved horror.

If we let man think, with the New Theology, that his nature is in an inevitable progress to perfection, which his selfishness may indeed retard, and in which his sins may involve remedial pains, but which none the less is certain of final attainment, we cannot fail, human nature being what in experience we know it to be, to strengthen the tendency to let things take their course, and to weaken the strength of the naked appeal to the human will as the arbiter of the man's destiny—his heaven or his hell.

Once more, what applies to the individual applies to the nation or the race. Christianity believes in a divine purpose of progress, and finds the goal of human progress assured in 'Christ upon the throne.'

But it knows, in historical fact, that nation after nation has fallen back; that there is such a thing as the decay and dissolution of civilizations. We look back upon 'the giant forms of empires on their way to ruin.' And the prophets of God have in every age carried the message of God to their nation, that progress or catastrophe depends on themselves, and depends at bottom upon moral character; that, though a nation may subsist with much wickedness in it, its subsistence depends upon the maintenance of the core of righteousness within it—upon the vigorous force of a resisting body of righteous men in whom the nation will consent to recognize its true self. Once more, then, the more you strengthen the belief in a practically inevitable or necessary progress—a belief which indeed is flatly contradicted by experience—the more you weaken the prophetic appeal to the social conscience of men.

It will be said that in all this I am appealing only to what is edifying, not to what is true. I am not afraid of this argument. Christianity is a revelation appealing to man's moral will, and saying in effect, 'Try it, and so prove its truth.'

And if it be the case that the preaching of the Christian doctrine in its purity does as a matter of fact show itself in the fruits of converted living and moral liberty regained, I feel sure that the Christian doctrine has been proved practically true. It has shown that it possesses the secret of life. That is what actually happened in the first preaching of Christianity and in every subsequent moral revival of its power. This is an actual experience viewed from outside in general history, and viewed from inside in the record which great and conspicuous Christians—from St. Paul and Justin Martyr and Cyprian and Augustine downwards—have given of their moral experience as seen from within. The better the men, we notice in passing, the sterner the view they have taken of the sinfulness of their sins. This moral experience constitutes the subject-matter for a philosophy of sin, and for, what must go with that, a philosophy of the relation in which the soul of man stands to God, of the relation of our dependent personalities to the Absolute. We get here into a very obscure subject. Certainly it has not been satisfactorily solved hitherto. Perhaps it never

will be in this world. But Christianity has made a vast contribution to the subject, and the core of the Christian contribution lies in the truth, proclaimed by God's prophets, reaffirmed by His Son, confirmed by all Christian experience, the secret of all Christian progress in the individual and the race, that sin lies in the rebellion of the dependent or created will against the will of the Father and the Creator. Sin is lawlessness.

LECTURE V

THE MEANING OF CHRIST'S DIVINITY

The mode of thought which is known as the New Theology is connected in all its parts. It concentrates its attention upon God as the universal Spirit, manifesting Himself and realizing Himself in the universe. Especially in the development of man's nature upward from the animal to the spiritual does it look for this revelation of God. And, from the ethical point of view, the highest point of achievement hitherto attained is found in Christ. In Him, as in no one else, we can really see God incarnate: we can see, that is, that humanity is really divine and God is really human. And, in the light of that vision we are to go forward to realize our divinity or divinize our manhood. For what Christ is, we are all in various degrees capable of becoming. We are all potentially sons of God, or Christs. However much hidden

or overlaid, the divine nature is in all of us, and is capable, especially under the influence of Christ, of being evoked into active and effective life. So, as man advances, will God become more and more incarnate in all humanity, or in other words the real identity of Godhead and manhood will become more and more evident. Thus 'the Incarnation doctrine is the glorification of human effort.'[1]

This way of conceiving the incarnation doctrine finds a guarded expression in the

[1] *Substance of Faith*, p. 88. For the whole paragraph see pp. 85–90, and *New Theol.* pp. 68–111. One point to be noticed is that Mr. Campbell conceives of the spirit, or higher self of humanity, as prior to all individual men, as having a real existence, and constituting 'a perfect and eternal spiritual being, integral to the being of God' (p. 31). This he elsewhere calls 'the Eternal Christ,' 'the archetypal eternal divine man.' It (or should I say he ?) is 'an emanation of the Infinite, the Soul of the universe,' or at any rate is one element of the 'infinitely complex being of God' (p. 89). This Eternal Christ it is which is manifested in the historical Jesus, and is also the higher self or fundamental being of every one of us. This doctrine of the eternal divine man would not require much restatement to be brought into harmony with the Church doctrine of the Eternal Word or Son. But, according to Mr. Campbell, we all are at bottom this 'Eternal Christ' in the same sense as was Jesus. Thus the 'Christ-man' appears again and again in history in different individuals (p. 107).

section of Sir Oliver Lodge's catechism from which I have just quoted one phrase. Mr. Campbell does not shrink from the plainest statement of the obvious conclusions of this doctrine. Two quotations will make this evident.

> General Booth is divine in so far as love is the governing principle of his life. Jesus was divine simply and solely because His life was never governed by any other principle. We do not need to talk of two natures in Him, or to think of a mysterious dividing line on one side of which He was human and on the other divine. In Him humanity was divinity and divinity was humanity.[1]
>
> Traditional orthodoxy would restrict the description 'God manifest in the flesh' to Jesus alone; the New Theology would extend it in a lesser degree to all humanity, and would maintain that in the end it will be as true of every individual soul as ever it was of Jesus. Indeed it is this belief which gives value and significance to the earthly mission of Jesus. He came to show us what we potentially are.[2]

It is plain that such an idea of the incarnation as is here presented, while it has in it much that is very close to the biblical idea, is at the root fundamentally different. And the difference follows on from the

[1] *The New Theology*, pp. 75–6. [2] ibid., pp. 83–4.

difference in the conception of God. If divinity and humanity are fundamentally identical, the same reality viewed from above and from below,[1] or if 'whatever else He may be, God is essentially man,'[2] the doctrine of incarnation stated above is the only one possible. On the other hand the idea of the incarnation contained in the New Testament and the creeds is based on the assumption, which we find everywhere in the Bible, that there is no difference so fundamental as that between the creator and the creature; and that Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, is in His own proper person God, the Son of God, 'integral to the being of God,' in a sense in which no other man can possibly be; even though the abundance of the divine love should give to all men of goodwill such fellowship, through Christ, in God, that we all become in Him 'sons of God' and 'partakers of the divine nature.'

That is my point. A doctrine which says 'Christ is God' and then goes on to say 'all men are God' is really, I fear,

[1] *The New Theology*, p. 75.

[2] ibid., p. 89. Mr. Campbell adds: 'Because He is the fount of humanity'—i.e. there is no difference in essence.

farther off the Bible and the creeds than the old-fashioned Unitarianism which said that Christ is not God. For the old-fashioned Unitarianism, in its best exponents, had at least a fundamental agreement with the Christian church up to a certain point—in its doctrine of God, and of His relation to the world and to mankind. But teaching which fundamentally identifies Godhead and manhood can never come near to being really Christian or biblical.

The view which the Christian church has taken of Christ's person, and His relation to His fellow men, may be stated in outline thus:

God made man for sonship to Himself, that is, capable of communion with God, and of intelligent correspondence with God's purpose in His kingdom of this world, where he was made vicegerent. He must, we feel, have been destined, perhaps by some process of orderly evolution, for a fullness of union with God such as has actually been revealed to us in Christ, even if there had been no sin, and consequently no need of redemption. This, however, must remain a matter of speculation. What we know is only what has actually

taken place, and that is necessarily seen on a background of human sin.

For mankind was disloyal. Men disordered their own natures by self-will, and introduced the disorder of their lawlessness into the world where they were set to exercise their dominion. The evil of sin is so radical in human nature, it goes so deep to the heart and foundation of manhood, that no remedy could be adequate save what must be expressed in such words as 're-creation' or 'regeneration.' That is to say, in other words, that God who made man must remake him. God was, all along, 'in the world,' and in man, therefore, as part of the world, sustaining him even in the life which he was misusing. Moreover, He never left Himself without witness; He was always 'the light of men' in conscience, even amidst the darkness of his errors, even when 'the darkness' seemed to come near upon 'overcoming' or overwhelming the light. And He was always 'coming' to man by His prophets and messengers in fuller communications of His will and character. Then at last 'he came.'[1] He entered by a new and wonder-

[1] John i. 1–14.

ful manner of union into human nature to redeem it from within. He was born—taking a human nature of the substance of a human mother—true man but new man; in a perfect manhood, both to reveal all that can be disclosed of God in manhood, and to reveal our manhood in the highest union with Godhead that can be even imagined. Thus He lived very God, but under conditions of manhood and human experience, a true human life—hiding not Himself from his own flesh, but bearing all the burden of a proper manhood in a world of sin. He makes His life, what man's life should be—a free-will offering to God His Father; and when the sin of man rejected Him and put Him to death, He was obedient, with a perfect human obedience, unto death, and thus sealed His sacrifice in blood. And the Father spared not His Son, but accepted His self-sacrifice, and, in Him, accepted our manhood; and when He died and was buried, raised Him from the dead, and glorified Him—still in our manhood—and exalted Him to His own right hand, there to become the head of the redeemed race of mankind; for by His Spirit, the spirit of the Father and the Son, sent down into

the hearts of men, He unites the sons of faith together into the fellowship of His manhood, in His society, the church, which is His body.

That is the faith of the Church. 'I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, very God of very God, who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary and was made man.'

There is no question that, though this divine action reaches in its effects as far as the sovereignty of God, backwards to the beginning, and forwards to the end, it is yet an historical event, occurring at a certain point of time, when Jesus of Nazareth lived and died and rose again—essentially and necessarily unique. It is plain also that in the sense in which Jesus Christ is, in this creed, divine, no other of the sons of men can conceivably be so. It is plain, once more, that this view of the incarnation of God in Christ as something necessarily unique follows from the doctrine of God which belongs to the Christian creed; just as the belief in the incarnation of God in mankind generally, with Jesus only for

the completest instance of what is really to come about in every man, follows from the belief in God as immanent in the world, and not to be otherwise thought of or known.

Are we, then, to substitute the view of the New Theology for the doctrine of Christ in the creeds? No doubt in part this issue has been determined, so far as we have determined to adhere to the faith of the Church about the being of God and the meaning of sin. But, looking at the doctrine of Christ by itself, what are we to say?

Mr. Campbell dismisses the doctrine of the creed with a contempt which is not very impressive on the ground that it 'puts an impassable gulf at once between Jesus and every other person.'[1] How is it, then, with the experience of mankind since the apostles taught them to believe the creed? Have they found an impassable gulf put between them and the Son of Man?

Has any of the sons of men who lived long ago, and was man and nothing more, been near to the men of later ages, in felt power and influence, as Jesus of Nazareth, believed to be indeed God incarnate, has been? Has any example been as close to men since He

[1] *The New Theology*, p. 80.

walked in Galilee, as His example? Nay, with the profoundest conviction I am sure that the view which declares Christ to be what we are, and essentially nothing more, only the supreme specimen of manhood—it is this view which, should it prevail, would be found to separate Him from us by an impassable gulf. He would then be separated from us, as men of other races or remote times are separated; or, again, He would be separated from us as the men of supreme genius of any kind are separated from ordinary men. If men came to think of Jesus Christ as, in the world of moral character, what a Dante or a Shakespeare are in the world of poetry, the power of His example would be as little effective for us, as the power of the example of any other unique and solitary genius. The more perfect it is, the more totally outside our range it seems. But the example of Jesus, sinless and perfect as He was on earth, is perpetually brought near to every child of man. Because He who set them the example of a perfect life, does also by His Spirit ever work inwardly in the heart of every one of His members, to mould them inwardly into the likeness of the example

which ever lives before their eyes outwardly. Thus it is that Christ, through nineteen centuries, has ever been brought near to the humblest of the sons of men—yes, brought near to them as man to man—and His example has been made effective as an inspiration and a power. But all this, only because this Christ, who was and is very man, was also and antecedently very God, and the bestower of the life-giving Spirit, and is able thus to give to His manhood a universal applicability, a universal extension and access, which, if it had been only the manhood of one man among many, it could never have had.

Moreover, the idea which the catholic creeds embody of a great recreative act of God to restore from its foundations a ruined manhood corresponds to the real need of man, as the deepest-seeing men have realized it. Philosophers, from Plato to Carlyle, have been found scoffing at contemporary reformers because their proposed reforms did not, and could not, go deep enough to get at the root of the evil in human society.[1] What is wanted, they have

[1] See Carlyle, *Past and Present*, bk. i., c. 4, 'Morrison's Pill,' and the argument of Plato's *Republic*.

declared, is in some sense a fresh start for humanity, and a new birth. So the moral philosophers have reasoned—in words. But it is Jesus alone, and He only as believed in by the church, who has in any adequate sense translated this logical and moral requirement into actual reality. In Him we see moving among men a true man, truly the Son of Man. But the perfection of His manhood is found in its sinlessness—in that which separates Him from all other men, in that which makes His moral consciousness so profoundly different from that of Isaiah or Jeremiah, or St. Peter, or St. Paul, or any other of the greatest and best of His disciples, who, the greater and better they were, have felt only the more profoundly their sinfulness and their fallibility. It is true manhood we see in the sinless Jesus, but new manhood: a second Adam in diviner power to redress the balance of the first. And by faith in Him men of all times and races can obtain what is the fundamental moral need of their nature—not only a standard of manhood, but a new birth in spirit and power.

Now we have to ask the question whether the conception of Christ which is pre-

sented to us in the catholic creed is really warranted by the facts, so far as historical inquiry can present them to us, in the records of the New Testament; or whether, on the other hand, we can find traces of a merely human Christ gradually divinized by the pious imagination of the church, or of a Christ divine only as other men are divine.

First, then, let us inquire what the first Christians thought about Christ. We go first to the epistles of St. Paul, and we find there that St. Paul consistently and without doubt interprets Christ's person in the sense of the creeds.

He was God's 'own' Son, before He was 'sent forth, in the fullness of the time, born of a woman, that he might redeem us men, that we might receive the adoption of sons.' [1] 'Existing originally in the form, or essential characteristics, of God, he thought not equality with God a prize to be clutched at, but emptied himself, or impoverished himself, and took the form or essential characteristics of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he

[1] Gal. iv. 4; Rom. viii. 32.

humbled Himself and became obedient, unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also exalted him (in the human nature which He had assumed) and bestowed upon him the name that is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.'[1] Once more: 'In him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist.'[2] It was only because He existed thus in His eternal being and in the universe that, when He was made man and glorified, it could be the Father's pleasure 'that all the fullness of the Godhead should dwell in him bodily,'[3] and that He should be set 'far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also

[1] Phil. ii. 6-11, 2 Cor. viii. 9. [2] Col. i. 16, 17.
[3] Col. i. 19, ii. 9.

in that which is to come; and that all things should be put in subjection under his feet, who is the head over all things to the church, which is his body.' [1]

This is not a full account of St. Paul's doctrine of Christ, but it is sufficient to show that what St. Paul believed about Christ makes Him indeed 'integral to the being of God,' and that he could not possibly use such language about any other. 'To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things and we unto him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and we through him.' [2]

Moreover, there does not appear to have been any discussion in the church on the matter of belief about Christ. St. Paul was in controversy with the Christian Jews of Jerusalem on many points; but there appears to have been no controversy with regard to the interpretation to be given to the person of Christ. The same doctrine of Christ—the doctrine which makes Him properly divine as well as human—appears in the most Jewish of the New Testament books, the Apocalypse,[3] as well

[1] Eph. i. 21, 22. [2] 1 Cor. viii. 6.

[3] See Swete's *Apocalypse* (Macmillan), pp. clvi. f.

as in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and in the Epistle of Peter, and in the Fourth Gospel.

Was, then, this stupendous doctrine about one who had been seen and touched and heard as man among men, who had eaten and drunken and died and been buried as man in a human body—was it based upon His own witness, the witness of His own human lips ?

Now, we have the strongest historical grounds for asserting that the Fourth Gospel was written in his old age by one who had moved in the innermost circle of the disciples of Jesus in Judæa and Galilee, when He was among them ; and also that he was none other than John, the son of Zebedee. So that we have in this Gospel a living memory of 'the disciple whom Jesus loved.' If this be so, as I certainly believe, we cannot doubt that our Lord Himself had, even if only rarely, confessed in unmistakable terms His own divine and eternal Sonship. 'I and my Father are one,' 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.' [1] But, without dwelling

[1] John. x. 30, xiv. 9. It is impossible to maintain that St. John would have tolerated the idea of such

upon this now, as you will know it to be in dispute among critics, I prefer to rest our case upon the first three Gospels, which present us with the memorials of Christ as they were treasured in the church of the thirty or forty years after our Lord's death, the church in which His apostles lived and worked and taught.

Do we find there the humanitarian Christ, a Christ divine possibly, but only as all other men are divine? Or do we find there the Christ of the church's belief?

I speak the honest truth, I can hardly tell you how often, with the whole sincerity of which I am capable, I have asked myself that question, and reinvestigated it anew to the very utmost of my power, and always with a renewed certainty of assurance that the humanity of our Lord, as you find it recorded in the pages of the Synoptic

phrases being put into the mouth of other men to signify that manhood and Godhead are at bottom one and the same thing. Thus he wholly differentiates between John the Baptist, with his assuredly divine mission, and Christ, with His divine origin (John iii. 28–36), or between the divine Sonship of Christ—'God only begotten'—and the divine sonship, the title to which He communicates to those who believe in Him or are in Him new-born (John i. 1–18).

Gospels, is not capable of any other interpretation, if you are fair to the evidence, than that which the first Christian church gave it. I admit, of course—indeed, I do more than admit—that it was not suddenly and all at once that the first Christians leaped to the clear consciousness of what was contained in their creed, as you find it a little later in St. Paul and St. John. Immediately after the resurrection they are occupied solely with the thought of the Messiahship of Christ, as foretold in Old Testament prophecies. So great and overwhelming a thought as that of the incarnation is not suddenly to be grasped by men's minds, if it is to be grasped healthily. But it was held by the Christian church under the full influence of the apostles, and if we ask whether the belief was justified by what they had actually seen in our Lord and heard from our Lord, I say, with complete assurance, that it was.

I am now assuming that these Gospels are substantially true. But I do not ask any kind of exemption for any historical document from free historical criticism. If you reach the conclusion that the Gospels are really historical, it is sometimes assumed,

absurdly enough, that you are trying to exempt them from criticism. If you recognize that there are parts of the Old Testament which are not historical, though they are written in an historical form, and then go on to declare that you believe the Gospels are strictly historical, people will say that you are trying to allow criticism of the Old Testament documents, and to disallow it in the case of the New. That is really quite meaningless. In every history of every nation you recognize that there are different stages of historicity, in proportion to the character and nearness of the evidence. You do not say, because you are doubtful about the history of King Arthur, that therefore you cannot be certain about the history of King Alfred, or of Richard the Second, or of George the Fourth. The historical certainty depends on the nature and closeness of the evidence. I do not ask for any use of the Gospels which is not in accordance with the strictest requirements of historical evidence. I do not make any claim for them except what is made in St. Luke's preface—namely, that he has done his best to draw up the most authentic narrative from first-hand evidence:

Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed.

I believe that self-witness of St. Luke, the Christian physician and companion of St. Paul, to be exactly true. I believe that in his Gospel, as also in St. Mark, and in the first Gospel, you really have, written down by honest recorders, the evidence of those who had been with our Lord, eyewitnesses of His life and works, as well as ministers of the word.

Well, then, let us look at the picture. And first, at Christ's sinlessness. What a stupendous fact that is! Read the Old Testament, and hear how every prophet, in proportion as he is holy, feels his sinfulness. Hear how St. Paul feels it, and cries out under the pain of it; how St. John impugns any one who says that he is not sinful: 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in

us.'[1] See how the angelic messenger in St. John is represented as jealous for the divine glory of God, refusing all acts of worship: 'See thou do it not; I am a fellowservant with thee, and with thy brethren the prophets . . . worship God.'[2] And then think of Jesus of Nazareth as He moved among men, conscious of sinlessness, never by word or deed giving any indication of that sense of liability to error and sin which has belonged to the whole human race apart from Him, and with deepening intensity in proportion as men have been good and religious.

Think of the way in which He trained men to trust in Him; how deliberately and gradually He trained His disciples to believe in Him, to put their whole trust in Him, as in one who was capable of providing for them in body and in spirit, capable of supplying and satisfying all their spiritual needs, as well as helping them in all physical distresses, by His love and power. By no single or sudden word, but by the whole process of His training, He brought them to regard Him as that which God only can be for the soul of man

[1] 1 John i. 8. [2] Rev. xxii. 8, 9.

—its adequate repose: 'I will give you rest.'

Think of the authority with which He spoke—'No man knoweth the Son save the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him.'[1] Think of the authority with which He set aside what lawgiver and prophet had said of old—'It was said to them of old time . . . but I say unto you.'[2] Think how, in the parable, He distinguishes Himself, as the Son, from God's earlier messengers, who are the slaves.[3]

Think, above all, of what it must have been to those disciples to be constantly with one who claimed to be the final judge of men in their acts, and also in their secret thoughts. 'Many shall come to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in thy name, and in thy name do many wonderful works? Then will I (discerning their secret selves) profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me.'[4] 'Before

[1] Matt. xxi. 36–37, Mark xii. 6, Luke xx. 12–13.
[2] Matt. v. 21–22, 27–28, 33–34, 38–39, 43–44.
[3] Matt. xi. 27, Luke x. 22.
[4] Matt. vii. 21–22.

him shall be gathered all the nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats.'[1] Think, I say, what it would be to keep company with one who in His innermost consciousness knew Himself, and declared Himself to be, the final and infallible judge of all men, not in their outward acts only, but in their secret thoughts also. Such experience could lead to one result only; it did lead to that result—that they came to believe Him to be verily and indeed what the creed asserts Him to be, what the unanimous consent of Christendom has declared him to be—God, the very Son of God, made man.

I say read, and re-read, that record of Christ in the Gospels, and ask yourselves the question—Is not the old dilemma true: either He was God, or He was not a good man? There is, I suppose, no subtler, at the same time there is no more tremendous, sin than the sin of one stronger spiritual nature asserting itself in ascendency over others, and leading them to put in that which is only a creature the reliance and the faith which is due to the Creator. That

[1] Matt. xxv. 32.

is the real heart of the worst kind of sacerdotal tyranny. Yet we cannot escape from the conclusion that Jesus of Nazareth did, in His training of the disciples, deliberately put Himself in that place in their hearts which would have involved the supreme usurpation, had it not been the only legitimate place for Him who was really both their brother and their God.

Must we not conclude, then, that the Christian interpretation of the person of Christ, the interpretation accepted by consent in the time of St. Paul, is the interpretation which the facts, when you scan and scrutinize them, warrant—the only interpretation which is really compatible with those facts? If we accept this conclusion, we do indeed accept a belief in Christ as divine in a sense in which no other man is or could be divine; but we are led on by a safer route than that of the New Theology, to an extension of the incarnation of God to all humanity. For it was not for Himself that the eternal Son took our manhood: it was that all other men, through faith in Him and new birth into Him, might become, in their measure, partakers of the divine nature. The incarnation waits for

its fulfilment upon the completion of the body of Christ, which is the church universal, till God is manifested in the whole of the redeemed humanity, in the new heaven and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

LECTURE VI

MIRACLES

THE next point on which we are to contrast the New Theology with the creed of the old religion is in the matter of miracles. It is plain enough that if we think of God as the soul of the world, manifesting Himself only in the orderly development of the universe; and of Christ as only the supreme instance of what all men in principle are, or are becoming; we cannot but feel a sort of intellectual resentment in face of the claim for certain abnormal and unique events to be believed in the case of Jesus Christ—His birth of a virgin, for instance, or the resurrection of His body on the third day from the tomb, as well as the miracles which He is recorded to have wrought on others. For such events force us to think of God as acting in or upon the world independently of its normal order or sequence. They are miracles—supposed

events which the order of the world and of man cannot account for. Thus the tendency of the New Theology is to depreciate the spiritual value of the belief in miracles, to criticize the evidence for them, and to deny that they actually occurred. The teachers of this school would indeed admit that the minds or wills of certain more or less exceptional men may exercise exceptional power over the body—their own bodies or those of other men. Such are the phenomena of 'suggestion' and 'faith healing.' And modern critical writers have a tendency to accept certain of the recorded miracles of Jesus, and to explain them as a form of 'mental therapeutics.'

'That He should have had power to cure nervous diseases by words of power or by a spiritual predominance is perfectly natural.' So writes Prof. Gardner.[1] And Prof. Harnack:[2] 'In our present state of knowledge we have become more careful (than earlier critics), more hesitating in our judgement, in regard to the stories of the miraculous which we have received from antiquity. · That the earth in its course

[1] *The Growth of Christianity* (Black), p. 75.

[2] *What is Christianity?* (Williams & Norgate), p. 29.

stood still, that a she-ass spoke, that a storm was quieted by a word, we do not believe, and we shall never again believe; but that the lame walked, the blind saw, and the deaf heard, will not be so summarily dismissed as an illusion.'

The miracles of healing are therefore, on the whole, accepted as possible, and treated as instances of the exceptional spiritual power of Jesus over the bodies of other men suffering from what are called 'functional diseases of the nervous system'—instances, that is, of what occurs in a whole class of recognized events, which are popularly grouped as cases of faith-healing. A medical authority[1] has recently examined this theory, and shown good reasons for denying that our Lord's miracles of healing can be accounted for on the neurotic theory. But, besides this, it must be noticed that the earliest record of the ministry of Christ contains, side by side with the miracles which it is proposed thus to explain, nature miracles—such as the feeding of the multitudes, and the walking upon the water, and the withering of the fig-tree, to

[1] Dr. R. J. Ryle, in the *Hibbert Journal*, April, 1907, 'The Neurotic Theory of the Miracles of Healing.'

which such an explanation is totally inapplicable, but which rest on absolutely the same basis of evidence. So that the problem cannot be thus dealt with. And miracles which resist any such neurotic explanation, Prof. Harnack declares, 'We do not believe, and we shall never again believe.' I am thankful to recognize that Mr. Campbell, in the case of our Lord's physical resurrection, is not thus peremptory. He is inclined to admit it.[1] But he owns that his friends will not generally agree with him. And the adherents of the movement are unanimous in repudiating the belief in the virgin birth.

On the other hand, those who hold to the idea of God which finds expression in the creed, believe that, though He is manifested in the order of the world, He is not limited by it. It is the expression of a will which remains unexhausted and independent. Now it is doubtless true that a perfect will must always so act as that its action should not be arbitrary, but the expression of perfect law. Thus the greatest Christian thinkers have always seen that miracles must express and not violate the

[1] *The New Theology*, pp. 220 ff.

order of the world, in the deepest sense in which the order of the world is the mind of God.[1] But we recognize at the same time that abnormal circumstances require in a free being abnormal actions.

A man of high intelligence, though his normal action will be methodical and orderly, retains his liberty to deal with an exceptional situation by some unusual and striking mode of action. To be tied to the normal and the habitual, when something exceptional is needed, is to be mechanical and not rational.

It is the highest order of rational action, as we know it in the world, which is our best image of God's action, and not mere mechanical uniformity. Thus the more fully we recognize in God the supremely free personality acting in the world, the more ready we shall be to accept the evidence for exceptional or abnormal action on God's part when the situation demands it.

The believer in the faith of the creed sees in the circumstances of the incarnation a situation essentially unique. Sin had disturbed the order of the world. It had

[1] See reff. in my Bampton lectures, *The Incarnation of the Son of God* (John Murray), p. 246.

made the world, so far as man controls it, a manifest disorder. Against this disorder God is represented in the Old Testament as in continual protest by the prophets. He will not, however, even so, deal with man so as to destroy his liberty. He deals with him for the restoration of the lost order, morally, by an appeal to his will and heart and mind. The incarnation of the Son is God's great act of redemption, or re-creation, to restore a disordered world. It is so unique a divine action, in so abnormal a situation, that it cannot surprise us if it requires something more than God's customary action in nature.

In some such way as this we may argue that the admission of the possibility of miracle is bound up with any belief in God as the supreme, and supremely free, personality. But such abstract argument takes us but a little way. We shall do better to examine the records and see whether there is real reason to suppose that the miracles actually occurred, and what kind of appeal they are intended to make to us.

I think we shall find the evidence of the actual occurrence of miracles is in the highest degree cogent, and at points overwhelming.

We are not now concerned with miracles reported from other ages, but with those of the New Testament—with those recorded in connexion with the manifestation in the world of the Christ of God. But we must extend our view beyond the Gospels to include also the records of the first proclamation of Christ.

For we find St. Paul witnessing, more than once, in the simplest and most incidental way, to the 'power of signs and wonders' which accompanied his own preaching[1] and which he regarded, not as peculiar to himself, but as the signs of an apostle. And this witness is borne out in the narrative of the Acts.

St. Luke, the disciple of St. Paul, who certainly wrote the Acts, and who was a physician, accustomed to observe diseases and their cures, records in the Acts of the Apostles not only miracles of the earlier period which were reported to him, but also miracles wrought by St. Paul when he was actually with the apostle, such as the raising of Eutychus and the healing of the father of Publius.[2]

[1] Rom. xv. 19, 2 Cor. xii. 12.

[2] Acts xx. 7ff., xxviii. 8, 9. Notice the 'we' in each case.

Then we go back upon the miracles wrought by Christ, and we take note that the earliest Gospel, the Gospel of Mark, which we have the best reason to believe represents the preaching of Peter, is full of these miraculous events, some of which, as has already been said, are miracles of power over nature, which can be in no way explained by the influence of mind over mind; and it will be observed that these miracles are no mere portents such as Matthew Arnold ridiculed, when he asked the question why he should be supposed to make an improbable statement more probable if he could turn his pen into a pen-wiper. The miracles of Christ are 'signs,' counterparts of His words, teaching the same lesson in another sphere. In fact, the teaching and the miracles are so inextricably interwoven, as web with woof in the same substance, that any treatment of the narrative which seeks to discredit the miracles must discredit the teaching also, and leave us, as the author of *Ecce Homo* said long ago, 'a Christ as mythical as Hercules.' If the teaching is certainly authentic, so, we are bound to say, are 'the works' also.

So natural do Christ's miracles—His 'works,' as they are called—seem in His case that we are inclined to interpret them simply as the laws of His nature. We find that each higher grade of nature has modes of action appropriate to it, which are 'supernatural' from the point of view of the nature which lies below—as animal life is 'supernatural' to inanimate nature, and human action to the nature that is merely animal. So we may say that in Christ we have a higher kind of nature which has its own new laws of action. These are Christ's natural works; but to other men they are miracles.[1]

But, on the whole, this is not the way in which the New Testament leads us to think of them. They are more often regarded as evidences of God working with Him, evidences that the divine power which rules nature was supporting Him and witnessing to Him.[2]

And now we turn to the miracles which the Christian church fastened upon to enshrine in its central creed as of the very substance of its faith. 'I believe that Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy

[1] See *Bampton Lectures*, pp. 47–8. [2] Acts ii. 22.

Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary . . . that He rose again the third day from the dead and ascended into heaven.'

The resurrection of Christ occupies evidentially in the New Testament a unique place. 'He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to a spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead.'[1] 'If Christ hath not been raised our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.'[2] So cries St. Paul. And St. Peter—'God begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.'[3]

It was, in fact, as the records show, and as all men agree, by the confident belief of the apostles that Christ had been repeatedly seen by them, risen from the dead, and that His divine sonship and mission was thus made evident by His triumph over death, that the foundation of the Christian church was made possible. There is also no doubt that this was understood to mean that in the same body in which He died and was buried, only transmuted into a higher state and power, he was raised again. St. Paul's words imply this[4]—

[1] Rom. i. 4. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 14. [3] 1 Pet. i. 3.
[4] 1 Cor. xv. 3–4.

'That he died, and that he was buried, and that he hath been raised the third day.' This phrase describes what can only be a physical occurrence to the body which had died and been buried, a physical occurrence at a particular moment of time. No apparition in another body would satisfy this language. And there is no event in the Gospel record which rests on more certain ground of evidence than that the women who came early to the sepulchre on the Easter morning found the tomb empty of the dead body.

The record of appearances is best given in St. Paul's words.[1]

Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, by which also ye are saved; I make known, I say, in what words I preached it to you, if ye hold it fast, except ye believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures; and that he appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve; then he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep; then he appeared to James; then to all the apostles; and

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 1–11.

last of all, as unto one born out of due time, he appeared to me also. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not found vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Whether then it be I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.

St. Paul was writing the Epistle to the Corinthians apparently in the spring of A.D. 55. He records doubtless what he had 'delivered' in all the churches he had taught since he began his missionary life some eight years before. And he is emphatic that the substance of this proclamation was common to him with the other apostles: 'Whether then it be I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.' This record is nothing less than the title-deed of the church—the title-deed of a society which based all its authority on witness, the record of chosen witnesses to the life and death and resurrection of Jesus.

Much is made of the discrepancies between the various narratives of our Lord's appearances. I do not think that they are greater than the discrepancies that will be

found in the narratives of eye-witnesses of many momentous events in history. The matter must be examined in detail elsewhere.[1] But the strength of the evidence is much greater than can be measured by the precise trustworthiness of each particular record. There is no question that the whole apostolic body were lifted out of despair and disheartenment into an absolute confidence of faith, within the compass of a short period of days, by repeated visits, as they were assured, of their Lord risen from the dead. If we may so express it, their lives were driven round a sharp corner, or set on a new basis.

They were men different in character, but the impression made upon them was the same. They were, as appears in the Gospel narrative, all of them plain, unimaginative men, as unlike 'visionaries' as possible: the impression was made on them in spite of their being 'slow of faith.' It was the kind of impression, therefore, which only solid objective events can make upon the senses and the mind.

[1] Dr. Sanday's treatment (*Outlines of the Life of Christ* (Clark, 1905), pp. 170 ff.) will be found, as usual, singularly candid.

This place of the resurrection in God's revelation of His purpose and mind is evident enough. It was the reversal of the impression made by the Christ being left to die. It made evident that the divine power, the power which creates and sustains the world, was on the side of Christ.

I want to emphasize this point. Nature is, in its normal order, non-moral in appearance. God maketh the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and, as certainly, overwhelms in physical catastrophes evil and good indiscriminately. At times nothing lays so great a strain on faith as the totally mechanical or non-moral aspect of nature. If nature can be so cruel, we cry, can the God of nature care? But at the great central moment in the world's moral history, in the case of Christ, we are allowed to see that the God of nature and the God of conscience are one. The real meaning of the incarnation, of the Word made flesh, requires, as we may say, that in the case of Christ it should thus have been made evident that there is only one lordship in heaven and earth. And the faith of all subsequent generations has rested on that evidence, and been made strong.

In Christ we see in summary the purpose of God for mankind. In His resurrection we see in summary that at the last the material, as well as the spiritual order, is to take its place in the kingdom of God, in the new heaven and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

The account of the physical state of the risen Christ, given in the Gospel records, taken together, is so remarkable and so completely without precedent in Jewish literature, that it is in itself a great witness to its truth. Our Lord, in rising, is probably represented as having passed out of the grave-clothes, leaving them to collapse.[1] He is certainly represented as having passed out of the tomb before the stone was rolled away to show that He was gone. He passed into the apostolic assembly through the closed doors. He appears and disappears, and in 'a different form.' He is not represented as living in any one place, or as passing by the modes of motion which He had used, like other men, in His mortal body, from place to place. He is in a higher state of being. His body has been

[1] John xx. 6, 7. See Latham's *The Risen Master*, (Camb. 1904), pp. 26, 43–44, and note.

so transmuted as to be no longer subject to the laws which restrain the grosser mortal body. He can manifest Himself under those old, lower conditions, so as to eat with His disciples. But He is no longer subject to them. The body is now spiritual: that is to say, it is the simple instrument of spiritual purpose. It has lost all its gross and hampering limitations. The idea of the spiritual body, as St. Paul conceives of it, in forecasting the destiny of all the redeemed, corresponds much more than is generally supposed with the facts as recorded of our Lord's risen body in the Gospels. All the acts of the risen Christ are thus symbolic. They are done from no natural necessity, as eating or sleeping or moving was a necessity of His former mortal state: they are simply exhibitions in outward form of spiritual purpose. Thus, when He rose before His disciples' eyes and passed upwards in His ascension, the act was symbolic. He was not obliged to go that way to a heaven above the clouds, any more than He was obliged to pass by a particular road from Galilee to Jerusalem. He is above all such limitations. Doubtless the apostles thought heaven was above

their heads. And still, though we no longer think so, we cannot help expressing our ideas of what is heavenly by the physical metaphor of 'above.' And, whatever our astronomy, the record of our Lord's rising before the apostles' eyes upwards, expresses the spiritual truth of His 'exaltation to the right hand of power' as no other motion could have done. The ascension, as an event in time, was the last of the appearances of Jesus, the same in character with those that had gone before. It comes to us only on the authority of St. Luke; but such an event, witnessed by the apostles, is required to explain the unanimity with which the first church believed that Christ was 'received up,' and 'was seated at the right hand of God.'

The miracle of our Lord's virgin birth rests on a different basis of evidence from the rest of the record. It was not part of the original apostolic testimony; for the church laid the greatest stress on testimony, and the period of which the apostles were witnesses extended only from the preaching of John the Baptist till the time when Jesus was taken up from them.[1] This

[1] Acts i. 22.

explains the limits of St. Mark's and St. John's Gospels, which comprise simply the apostolic witness.

Thus the virgin birth was not part of the grounds on which belief in Jesus was asked for. It was on the grounds of what Jesus had said and done and suffered, on the grounds of what God had done when He raised Him from the dead, that belief was asked for in His divine sonship.

But when men had first believed, and come into the believing circle, they could not but have inquired into the circumstances of Jesus' birth. Originally there were but two chief witnesses of these circumstances, Joseph and Mary; and Mary was still alive in the first circle of believers. When we look at the two narratives we have got of our Lord's birth, they present all the appearance of coming respectively from Joseph and Mary. They are independent, and certainly both of them purely Jewish in origin.[1]

In St. Matthew we have an account of our Lord's birth wholly from the side of Joseph—his perplexities, his difficulties, his reassurance, his protection of the mother

[1] See Harnack, *Luke the Physician*, pp. 166–7.

and the child. I believe the account in St. Matthew to be based ultimately on the witness of Joseph, very possibly left in writing[1] with his family to protect the character of the mother. On the other hand, in the record in St. Luke, we have a narrative which, if it is at all trustworthy, must come from Mary, and no one else—Mary, who 'kept all these things, pondering them in her heart.'[2] As evidence of its trustworthiness, besides its own convincing character, we may point (1) to the fact that it breathes the spirit of the Messianic hope, before it had received the rude and crushing blow involved in the rejection of the Messiah by His own people. The Child is to 'reign over the house of Jacob for ever.' 'God hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; . . . salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us.' It is the hope of 'the redemption of Jerusalem' that is to be satisfied.[3] Such expressions

[1] Zechariah could write (Luke i. 63), and therefore presumably Joseph.

[2] Luke ii. 19.

[3] Luke i. 33, 69, 71, ii. 38: cf. Gwatkin, *Knowledge of God* (Clark, 1907) ii. p. 25. 'These intensely Jewish

could hardly have originated when the real event had been made plain.

(2) To the fact that the narrative is given us by the careful and intelligent recorder St. Luke, who grounds his claim to write on his having 'traced the course of all things accurately from the first.'

There is good evidence, then, for the fact that our Lord was born of a human mother only, without a human father. The church fastened upon this event, and from the beginning of the second century it is enshrined in the early confessions of faith, as something integral to the Christian religion. I believe this instinct was sound. It seems to me that the moral miracle of Christ's sinlessness is apt not to be duly estimated. It did constitute Him, not less properly human, but distinct from other men by a distinction which goes down to the depths of our nature. His sinlessness agrees with the estimate which St. Paul forms of Him as a new creation—the 'last Adam'— a fresh start for humanity. I think such a fresh start for humanity is

hymns must have been written by Jews, and at a time before Israel had finally rejected Christ—say before A.D. 62.'

naturally associated with some physical miracle. It is in itself strictly an interruption of the natural order or sequence. The character of Christ's manhood involves such an interruption. He was not a natural product of the existing order. It is natural, therefore, to believe that the divine action which gave Him birth would be, in the physical world also, exceptional. It is natural to believe, further, that the birth of the eternal Son in manhood should differ in circumstances and conditions from the production of a new human personality. In fact, the agreement of the church's belief about Christ's person with the acceptance of the miracle of His birth is so intimate that in history the two have been inseparable. There have been no believers in the doctrine of the creeds who have not been believers in the virgin birth, and in recent years it has become increasingly evident that those who disbelieve in the virgin birth are in other respects also adherents of the New Theology : they mostly doubt the bodily resurrection ; and give to the incarnation a different sense from that in which the Creed proclaims it. I think the tendencies of the present

moment strongly confirm the position that the acceptance of Christ's virgin birth is in vital connexion with the whole of Christian belief.

LECTURE VII

THE ATONEMENT AND THE INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE

On the conceptions of God, of sin, and of Christ, and on the credibility of miracles, we have been able to present to ourselves a more or less marked contrast between the New Theology and the fundamental ideas of the old religion. There are other doctrines of Christianity—notably the doctrines of the Atonement and the inspiration of Scripture—about which the New Theology has a good deal to say, but on which the contrast between the new and the old need not, and indeed cannot, be brought to a like issue, because the Christian society has never given these doctrines a definite form in any authoritative creed, and we have therefore got no definite standard of belief to refer to. I shall have occasion later again to draw attention to this. It will appear plainly that it was a true

instinct which caused the catholic church to define its faith in terms of the doctrine of God and the person of Christ, and to leave the belief in Christ's atonement and the inspiration of Scripture undefined.

On the subject of the atonement, Sir Oliver Lodge is inadequate, yet reverent and appreciative.[1] Mr. Campbell begins, indeed, by giving a crude parody of the 'accepted belief' on the subject,[2] but afterwards goes as far in recognition of Christ's vicarious sacrifice as any one can go, who believes that in our various degrees we are all fundamentally Christs. The fact is that no theology which is based on the principle that Godhead and manhood are at bottom identical, and that what Christ was all other men are, can really come near to the New Testament idea of atonement.

What I propose to do here is—without defining what has been left undefined, or even seeking to determine anything that is obscure—to state the New Testament idea of atonement in its main principle, so as to guard it from abuse, and to show that

[1] *The Substance of Faith*, pp. 98–100.

[2] *The New Theology*, pp. 114–15.

it follows inevitably from the fundamental doctrines which we have already considered, of God and sin and Christ.

As regards the inspiration of Scripture, it is again plain that a teaching which diverges so far from the fundamental teaching of the Bible about God and man and Christ as the New Theology does, can hold only a very attenuated doctrine of its inspiration.[1] On this subject again I propose to content myself with showing that there is a doctrine of inspiration, which has the fullest spiritual and practical value, and satisfies the whole requirement of the church, which any one who accepts the Creed can hardly hesitate to make his own.

THE DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT

Christians, from the very first, saw in Christ's death not only a crime on the part of His murderers, but also on His part a voluntary sacrifice, and a sacrifice by which their redemption had been won. The Gospels represent Him at the last supper proclaiming the sacrificial nature of the

[1] *The New Theology*, pp. 176 ff. *The Substance of Faith*, p. 93, is much more reverent.

death which He was to undergo. His body was being given, and His blood poured out, for men and for the remission of sins.[1] One of the earliest speeches in the Acts represents the church as seeing in Christ's death and resurrection the fulfilment of the great prophecy of the Servant of Jehovah who was to save his people by his vicarious sufferings and death.[2] The heart of Christendom has gone out in welcome to this teaching as to hardly anything else. The 'showing of the Lord's death,' as the sacrifice of our redemption, has been from the first the chief service of catholic Christendom, and the crucifix generally its most popular symbol; and the proclamation of the glory of the atonement—in hymns such as 'Rock of Ages'—has been the central theme of 'evangelical' worship. But while the heart has welcomed the doctrine, the intellect has been baffled more conspicuously here than at other points in the faith and worship of Christendom. There have been deeply different theories—as Origen's and Anselm's, and Abelard's and

[1] Mark xiv. 24, Matt. xxvi. 28, Luke xxii. 19, 20, 1 Cor. xi. 24–6.

[2] Acts iii. 13, 26†, cf. Is. lii.–iii.

Calvin's—which we have all come to recognize as in various ways inadequate. And the church has never corporately faced the question raised, or embodied its faith in any formula, while all the time the doctrine is liable very easily to be so isolated, and distorted in popular belief, as to become a dangerous and misleading error.

It is true to say that, as formalism has been the besetting sin of catholic Christendom, so the misuse of the doctrine of the atonement has been for Protestant Christianity; and in both cases with the same result: that of weakening the effect of the central lesson of the religion of the Bible—that salvation means deliverance from the actual power of sin into a state of actual righteousness, and that fellowship with God is in no other way possible than by becoming actually like God in moral character. This moralizing of religion is the chief object, we may say, of the religion of the Bible, both in the Old and in the New Testament. The early church, under the first inspiration of the Spirit, was preeminently a body characterized by its lofty and unworldly ethical tone. It was the moral 'salt of the earth.' The peril under

Catholicism has been for the church, as it became popular, to be satisfied with outward conformity, and lose the strenuousness of its moral appeal. The peril under Protestantism has been for people to dwell complacently upon 'the danger of thinking to be saved by works,' and to take Christ's 'finished work' as a substitute for their own effort. And the idea of vicarious punishment—Christ punished that we might be 'let off'—has, more than anything else, tended to alienate the best moral conscience of mankind from Christian teaching.

Let us try, then, to grasp at least the main principle of the atonement doctrine, and, if we can, to make sure its safeguards.

In Christ we saw—not the highest achievement of human nature, but the recreative act of God. It was the eternal Son of God who 'for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate and was made man.' That is the starting-point of the Christian view of Christ's work. 'God, in the person of Christ, was reconciling the world unto himself,' and undoing the evil of man's rebellion. Certainly, as will appear, He will not redeem us without our co-operation.

Every faculty of our human nature will be summoned to correspondence. It is within us, and not apart from us, that our redemption is to be wrought. But, first of all, the great act is accomplished *for* us and independently of us. 'He trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him.' Alone He set the perfect example of the sinless and flawless manhood. Over against all our wilfulness and weakness and selfishness and pride, He offered before the Father a perfect obedience. And when human sin laid upon Him the penalty of failure and suffering and ignominy and death, He did not refuse to 'learn obedience from the things that he suffered.' He was obedient 'unto death.' He sealed His self-sacrifice in the shedding of His blood. And this human sacrifice of obedience perfected in death the Father accepted, and ratified His acceptance by raising Christ from the dead and exalting Him to the heavenly glory. 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'

Then out of that manhood, accepted and glorified, proceeds forth the Holy Spirit, who is to gather all the sons of faith, all who will accept Christ for their master and

their saviour, into such intimate union with Him, that they are to share His character and His suffering and His glory. This is 'Christ *in* us.' 'He shall see his seed . . . and be satisfied.' It is the fruit of His sacrifice. But up to this point it is all God's act *for* us, God's redemption of his people, in Christ. To it we contributed nothing. We can but welcome and receive in faith God's gift of our redemption in Christ. We can but join the great company of the redeemed who cry, 'Worthy art thou . . . for thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the earth.'[1] 'In none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved.'[2]

This is the real point of the church doctrine of the atonement. It is the recognition that our redemption is based upon something done simply and altogether *for* us by the self-sacrifice of Christ. It was His obedience, unto the shedding of His

[1] Rev. v. 9, 10. [2] Acts iv. 12.

blood, that won for man his new standing-ground in the face of God his Father, and his new power to put all evil under his feet. What our sins had lost, Christ's self-sacrifice has regained for us.

It is quite plain that in adhering to this teaching we are in no peril of attributing injustice to God. For it is God who, in Christ, is reconciling the world to Himself. It is divine self-sacrifice which is there at work—one will of love in Father and Son.

Moreover, there is strictly no justification for speaking of the Father as *punishing* the Son in our place. We have indeed here the supreme example of what is the noblest element in human history—vicarious sacrifice; but there is no evidence of vicarious *punishment*. The Father 'spares not' His Son, but suffers Him to bear, without miraculous exemption, all that human sin laid upon Him, all the failure and the desertion and the death. But there is no part of all that Christ bore that was not, in the natural order of the world that He came into, involved in His obedience. There is, so far as we can see, no other 'punishment' laid on Him by the Father than that bearing of the consequences of other men's sins,

which fell upon Him inevitably when He came as man into a sinful world, and which falls upon every man or woman, in measure, who enters into the lot of humanity. Nor does His suffering, His bearing the sin of the world, exempt other men from what can be more properly called punishment, the punishment of their own sins. His blood-shedding is indeed said to have been propitiatory, and to have enabled the Father to forgive us. A word shall be said about that expression directly. It warrants us in saying that Christ suffered in order that we might be forgiven; but we are not warranted in saying that Christ suffered in order that we might be exempted from suffering.

The penalty of sin, as it is presented to us in Scripture, may be said to be twofold. It is in part the alienation from God which lies in the sin itself, and is indistinguishable from the state of sin: and that Christ did not bear. In the case of each one of us it ceases to exist as soon as ever the soul passes from rebellion into surrender.

But besides this, which is purely personal, there is the penalty which lies in the consequences of sins, whether our own sins or

the sins of others : the consequences in the way of chastisement. And from these Christ does not save us. They are turned into our healing penance. 'Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth.' The record of God's dealings with His saints is that they are 'heard,' 'forgiven,' and 'punished.'[1] The idea that we are 'let off' *punishment* because Christ suffered for us, is, as far as we can see, entirely a figment, except in the sense that Christ, by His self-sacrifice, is the means of our redemption from that alienation from God which is the essence of sin and of hell.[2]

We get back thus to that question which the human mind seems to have found especially perplexing—the question why Christ's sacrifice should have been, as St. Paul and St. John seem to say it was, a necessary condition of the Gospel of forgiveness. There is only one passage in the New Testament where this question seems to occur,[3] and there St. Paul seems to give an answer which can satisfy our con-

[1] Ps. xcix. 8.

[2] I have argued this matter more at length in *Romans*, ii. 215 f.

[3] Rom. iii. 25. See the commentary of Sanday and Headlam (Methuen), or my exposition *in loco*.

science and mind on the subject. There he seems to say that it was necessary in view of the moral government of the world: because, after man's age-long lawlessness and God's age-long forbearance, a mere declaration of forgiveness, without an act of reparation on man's part would have led to a mistaking of the character of God. As it is, the gift of divine forgivenesss in Christ is bought at so costly a price, so splendid an act of reparation on the part of Christ, the representative head of the new humanity, that we cannot misunderstand the divine love in forgiving, as if it carried with it any abandonment of moral requirement.

My last point is this: there is no shadow of a doctrine of imputed righteousness in the New Testament, such as will suffer us to imagine that there can be any final reconciliation of an individual man with God, on any other basis than likeness of character. It is through and through the teaching of the Bible that it is only ultimately the godlike who can see God. All the work of Christ in setting us the perfect example, and in providing for us the opportunity of a fresh start, by the forgiveness of our sins, is only the prelude to that which is

in the deepest sense the work of Christ in us, the renewing by His spirit of heart and life and character into the divine image.

Here, then, we get the root principle of the atonement made for us in Christ. Christ, the incarnate Son of God, is the representative man. In Him our manhood is reconstituted, and plays its perfect part, and offers its perfect sacrifice, and wins its perfect acceptance. Finally, each man is accepted in the Beloved, only because he has come to share His character through the permeating influence of His Spirit. But long before this there is an initial and provisional acceptance. It is the great principle of God's dealings with us, that He deals with us, not as we are, but as we are becoming. At the first moment when the man turns, or as often as after repeated falls he turns, from his rebellion to obedience, and welcomes the offer of God, he is accepted and forgiven, and given his standing-ground in the Father's house, long before he is, in his own character, fit for it, because he has taken Christ for his master, and is seen already in the character of his elder brother.[1]

[1] That the first movement must be a movement of

My object in this discourse is attained if I have made it plain that the Christian idea of atonement is bound up with the idea of Christ's redemptive work as, first of all, a work done *for* us, without any co-operation on our part; but that, on the other hand, the safeguarding of this doctrine from moral abuse lies in the recognition that the work of Christ *for* us is only the prelude to His work *in* us: that it is Christ *in* us, the immanent Christ, which is 'the hope of glory.' And it will be apparent what a safeguard for the holding together of these two complementary half-truths—the Christ *for* us and the Christ *in* us—is afforded by the sacramental system. The sacraments as a whole are the symbols and instruments of the immanent Christ. The sacrament of the Breaking of the Bread in particular is

obedience as well as acceptance is seen in the fact that forgiveness is first of all associated with baptism, Acts ii. 38: cf. 'I believe in one baptism for the remission of sins' —baptism involving the acceptance of the obedience of Christ. And the same principle appears in each subsequent absolution.

The provisional character of all such initial acceptances is seen most clearly in the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant, where the subsequent exhibition of a temper incompatible with being forgiven, at once obliterates the absolution already given.

the continual representation of the atoning sacrifice, one, full, perfect and sufficient—but in the most intimate and inseparable connexion with the communication to us of the once-sacrificed life, the body and blood of the living Christ, to be our spiritual food.

THE INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE

The inspiration of Scripture, logically considered, is not the ground on which belief in Christ is to be asked for. The proclamation of Christ was first made by witnesses, and it was as witnesses that were to be believed. St. Luke, in the preface to his Gospel, makes no other claim than that of producing a careful record of the testimony of eye-witnesses of the Lord Jesus. So far as historical events are concerned, we must be content in our age to appeal to authentic history. No doubt historical testimony is not all that goes to make belief. There must be the spiritual disposition which makes acceptance possible. But the historical claim must be supported by good historical testimony. The Gospel records must make good their

claim to be such testimony. I believe, with the profoundest conviction, that they can do so. And that it is those who doubt or deny, and not those who accept the witness of the Gospel narratives, who do violence to the evidence.

When a man has once believed that Jesus is the Lord, the Christ of God, he will find himself believing in the inspiration of the Old Testament: that is to say, he will find in the Old Testament the record of a preparation for Christ. He will find in the Jews a chosen people, 'the sacred school of the knowledge of God and of the spiritual life' which was destined thence to spread to all mankind.

In other words, he will believe that the prophets of the Old Testament made a true claim when they claimed to speak 'the word of the Lord.' That word or message was communicated gradually, 'in many parts and in many manners.'[1] In many parts; and thus the believer in Christ will have no difficulty in accepting the fact that the Old Testament gives us the record of a gradual process of divine education; and that a very imperfect moral level was ac-

[1] Heb. i. 1.

cepted by God as a stage towards better things. The ancient fathers of the Christian church had no hesitation in recognizing that what we are to look for in the Old Testament morality is not perfection, especially in its earlier stages, but only a right direction.

And the message of God was given 'in many manners.' The Christian believer need not hesitate to recognize in the early chapters of Genesis narratives which are not historical, but give us 'doctrines in the form of a story.' He will not be shocked to find in the Old Testament popular legend, and poetical history, and stories narrated for a moral purpose, as well as history more strictly so called. For all these can be vehicles of the spiritual instruction of a nation. He will read the Hebrew documents like the documents of any other history, but he will find in them something which he does not find in any other history, to nearly the same extent—a continuous guidance in which he will recognize the inspiring influence of the Holy Spirit, training and guiding a race to right thoughts about God and man, to a right sense of sin, and a right expectation of redemption. He will

find in every one of the books of the Old Testament some element or aspect of this gradual revelation.

Thus, while he makes no claim for the Old Testament writers to be teachers of science, or to be infallible in matters of history, he will see in them, in their different degrees and according to their different literary methods and human idiosyncrasies, organs of one Spirit working towards one end, and that end the religion of Christ.

In Christ he will see the full purpose of that Spirit realized: and in the apostolic writers he will recognize a full measure of His inspiration. He will 'put himself to school' with each book of the New Testament in turn, to learn its lessons about Christ and His will. He will find the best reason for believing that the Holy Spirit did guide the apostolic writers 'into all the truth' about Christ. He need not believe that there are no mistakes or inaccuracies in the New Testament narratives; but he will recognize that we have there, when we judge the narratives simply as historical documents, trustworthy historical material; and in the spirit which

animated the writers he will see the Spirit of truth.

I do not think, then, that one who has come to believe in Christ, on the grounds, partly moral and spiritual and partly historical, which lead to, and justify, such belief—I do not think that he will find any difficulty in believing that the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, are 'given by inspiration of God,' and, as such, are 'profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.' [1]

And the more he believes this, the more thankful he may well become that the church has given no definition of inspiration, and that he is tied to no doctrine of the infallibility of every statement of Scripture.

[1] 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

LECTURE VIII

THE NEW THEOLOGY AND THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

THROUGHOUT these lectures I have been endeavouring to vindicate the superiority of the doctrine about God and nature and man, which is expressed in summary in the catholic creeds, over the ideas of the New Theology. What, therefore, according to my contention, we ought to do is by all means in our power to bring men back to the point of view of the creeds, or to the mind of the church which formulated the creeds.

For what has given the New Theology its advantage is partly the fact that the type of 'orthodoxy' which prevailed in England—the Protestant orthodoxy of the earlier nineteenth century—in certain important respects had given an expression of Christian truth quite inferior to that of the ancient church. Thus we have been

suffering from a largely legitimate reaction against the defects of this Protestant orthodoxy, just as at the Reformation the disastrous division of Christendom into national or sectional 'churches' was due to a reaction—again a largely legitimate reaction—against the excesses and perversions of the mediaeval church.

In particular the Protestant orthodoxy of the nineteenth century had three special defects.

First, it was largely coloured by Deism in its conception of God. It disposed men to think of Him as the creator who made the world, and the great emperor who rules it, as from outside, and whose action was exhibited in occasional 'interventions.' The evidence for the prevalence of this one-sided conception is sufficiently to be found in the fact that the New Theology, in emphasizing, again with a one-sided emphasis, the counter truth of God's immanence in nature, proclaims it as a new truth,[1] and is even naïvely unconscious how familiar this counter truth was in the original Christian theology. This oversight—which is in any case strange after so much modern writing

[1] See *The Substance of Faith*, p. 1.

on the ancient lines—has only been possible because the aspect of truth expressed in the divine immanence had been so largely forgotten in current orthodoxy. However, if it was not actually expressed in the creeds, it was, as I have said, thoroughly familiar in the church which formulated the creeds. And it is a prominent idea in the New Testament. It is expressed in such phrases as 'In him all things consist,' which imply that God, the eternal Word, is the immanent principle of order and system of the world; or again, 'In him we live and move and are,' 'We are all his offspring,' which imply that humanity exists in God and is in the image of God, in spite of the hindering or obscuring effect of sin. Here we have the ground for all that reverence for nature and natural law, and all that regard for human nature, which the New Theology found lacking in current orthodoxy. All that proper reverence for nature and for man, as the expression of God, is present in the original Christian theology, which at the same time keeps in the forefront of its teaching that thought of God which forms the substance of the revelation on which it bases its claims to

teach—the thought of God as independent of the world and supreme over it, supremely free in His own moral personality and power as the creator and the redeemer and the judge.

Its tendency to Deism was, then, the first defect of the Protestant orthodoxy of the last century.

The second defect was that it rested its system upon the infallibility of Scripture as a record, so that no seemingly scientific or historical statement of Scripture could be otherwise than true. Now I do not think that I am exaggerating when I say that that position has been riddled by modern science and historical criticism, and is no longer reasonably tenable. It is cruelty to young people to bring them up in the belief that a statement in the Bible about natural processes, or a statement in historical form, is necessarily 'true, because it is in the Bible.' The Bible was not given to teach us science, and its allusions to natural facts and processes are expressed in terms of the beliefs of its day; though doubtless there is remarkably little either in the Old or the New Testament that is contrary to our present science. Again, the

Bible is a literature which, like the literature of every other nation, contains 'history' of the most variable degrees of accuracy. Inspiration, which we rightly ascribe to the books, or, more strictly, to the writers of the Bible, is not the same thing as infallibility or inerrancy. It means that the Spirit of God was 'speaking by prophets,' and, especially through the Jewish race, was guiding men to right instead of wrong thoughts about God and nature and man and sin and redemption. This work of inspiration has its centre and culmination in Christ, and it is in His person, and the revelation of God involved in His person, that the faith of the church is centred. This is formulated in the creeds. It rests upon the witness of the apostles to the teaching of Jesus Christ and to His acts, and to certain crucial events of His life, especially His resurrection from the dead. Facts thus become of the first importance in our creed; but where the facts become of the first importance, the historical evidence becomes also first-rate evidence, which would be accepted as satisfactory in other departments of history. And it is upon the strength of the apostolic

witness, and not upon the infallibility of the history given in the whole area of the literature of Scripture, that we rest the security of our creed in matters of fact. We need to return, then, to the point of view of the creeds, and to be thankful that the only affirmation there made about the inspiration of Scripture is that the Holy Ghost 'spake by the prophets.'

Thirdly, the Protestant orthodoxy centred itself upon the doctrine of the atonement rather than of the incarnation, at the same time as it tended to give that doctrine an expression against which the moral sense of the world revolted. As I have said, you cannot well exaggerate the importance of the doctrine of the atonement, or the appeal which the divine sacrifice has made to the heart of man. But it has been formulated in no dogma, save so far as the creed confesses that Christ suffered 'for us.' Our faith is centred by the creeds upon the person of Christ, and the revelation of God given in Him, and upon the crucial events of our Lord's life in the flesh, by which our redemption was vindicated and assured.[1]

[1] I am not concerned here to ask how far these same

Once again we need to return to the point of view of the creeds.

I am well aware that there will be many to tell me that it is mere 'obscurantism' to maintain that the ideas of the creeds are the best guides to ultimate truth which the modern world possesses. I must leave to others the metaphysical vindication of the Christian idealism.[1] But I must say a word to those who plead that to identify Christianity with a doctrine of miracles is to place it in inevitable opposition to the intellectual spirit of our age. The really cogent evidence of religion, it is urged, must be found in facts of present spiritual experience; not in past events of disputable evidence, and of a kind which conflict with such a conception of the order of the world as science is perpetually strength-

tendencies, or other tendencies as harmful, were prevalent in the Catholic orthodoxy of the same period. I am simply taking the fact that there was dominant in England a certain orthodox Protestantism, and am concerned with the defects of that alone, as it is against that alone that the New Theology is in reaction.

[1] I think that the work of Mr. Inge, *Personal Idealism and Mysticism* (Longmans), and Mr. Illingworth's *Personality Human and Divine*, will perhaps assist the ordinary student to see his way better than any other recent books.

ening, and which tends to make miracles practically unbelievable.

I should, of course, be the first to agree that the most cogent evidence of religion lies in present spiritual experience; for it is present spiritual experience, our own and that of others, which constitutes the present witness of the Spirit. But the present witness carries us back to Christ. And He, we contend, cannot be otherwise legitimately interpreted than as the church has always interpreted Him. The Christian church has believed in Him, not only as the teacher of the truth, but as God incarnate, who made evident, in one memorable moment of history, by His power over nature and by His resurrection from the dead, that the moral will of the Father, the supremely free will of love, is really the one power which is over all and through all. The real enemies of the Christian spirit are the naturalism which denies the deadliness of sin and the necessity for redemption in each single man, and the pessimism which denies the sovereignty of love in the world as a whole. The victory of the Christian spirit over these constant tendencies of thought and feeling is bound up with its belief in God as He

has revealed Himself in Christ—in God who expresses Himself in nature, but is supreme over nature ; and it is precisely this belief which Christ's miracles have inspired and confirmed.

There is the deepest reason to believe that the actual power which Christianity has exhibited in the world, its power to lift human life and to create a new type of civilization, is due to its fundamental and distinctive ideas. In everyday experience we see such evidences of inconsistency between ideas and practice, between the professed beliefs of men and their actual conduct—we see so often pagan practice associated with nominal orthodoxy, and Christian conduct in individuals associated with more or less of unbelief in the Christian creed—that we are disposed to doubt whether theological ideas have very much real influence over life as a whole. But history, on a broad view, corrects this tendency. As we look at the long reaches of history we see in fact, and indisputably, that the practical character of a civilization coheres with its ultimate theological principles ; that the theology of the Buddha, and of Jesus Christ, and of Mahomet, lies at

the root of a quite distinct civilization and type of character, which, when you examine it, proves to be in the most intimate connexion with its ideas of God. 'The only really important changes in human history, those from which new types of civilization proceed, take place in the ideas, the conceptions, and the beliefs of men. The memorable events of history are the effects of invisible changes in the thoughts of men.'[1] It is the Christian idea of God which has lain at the root of Christian civilization and progress; and the recovery and maintenance and diffusion to new races of this civilization, and its capacity for progress, depend at bottom upon the maintenance of the fundamental ideas of God which are summarized in the catholic creeds, in which the real spirit of the Christianity of history has expressd itself.

It is the strength of the Church of England to stand upon the faith of these creeds, and on the basis of this fundamental unity to afford the greatest possible comprehensiveness. When Christianity came into the world it took shape in a catholic society which had three chief characteristics.

[1] Gustav Le Bon, *Psychologie des foules* (Paris 1907), p. 2.

1. Its outward constitution as a coherent society took shape universally in the successions of the bishops, who with their assistant officers were the ministers of the word and of the sacraments of the church, and who were in each local church the centres of unity, and also the links of unity between the different congregations in all nations and the maintainers of the continuous life of the whole church down the generations.

2. The faith of the church expressed itself (in slightly different forms in different places, but with substantial identity), in the creeds.

3. The canon of Scripture—that is, the collection of the writings of the Old Testament, and of the apostles and their companions in the New Testament—was formed, in order that the church might be kept constantly in touch with the original revelation, on the maintenance of which its healthy life depended.

These three elements of historical Christianity, beside which nothing else can, in at all a like sense, claim catholicity, have been preserved to the Church of England, and, in spite of all her weaknesses and un-

faithfulnesses, give her a unique opportunity and responsibility in the present Christian world.

It is with the second of these elements alone, the creeds, that we are now directly concerned.

The fact that the Church of England stands upon the creeds, and substantially upon the creeds only, by way of doctrinal requirement, constitutes her great opportunity.

When I speak of doctrinal requirements, I am speaking chiefly of requirements upon the officers of the church, the clergy. On joining the church, indeed, in baptism, or on receiving the full status of church membership in confirmation, the church claims the assent of the layman, also, to the faith of the Apostles' Creed. And the creeds are recited in our services in the language of the people, so that profession of faith is practically more prominent in our public services than in those of any other part of the church of Christ. But the responsibility of joining in our services, and of approaching the Communion, is left to the conscience of the layman, with whatever assistance or counsel he may like to

seek; and I trust it may continue so to be left.

On the clergy a more definite requirement is made. Day by day, and service by service, the minister is required, as leader of the congregation, to say 'I believe,' and to profess his faith thus solemnly and constantly in the explicit and unmistakable phrases of the creeds. Now I am sure that it is quite necessary that we should maintain in the whole community the sense of the moral obligation of the man, who thus stands to profess his personal faith as leader of the congregation, really to believe what he thus solemnly professes to believe, in terms which are deliberately unambiguous. The maintenance of this principle of good faith is necessary, not only for the sake of the Christian religion, but in the general interests of professional honesty. I have taken occasion before now to make it evident that, as far as I can secure it, I will admit no one into this diocese, or into holy orders, to minister for the congregation, who does not *ex animo* believe the creeds.

I am supported in this resolution, I feel sure, by the general mind of the church.

I know that I am supported by the bishops of this province of the church. Twice recently the bishops of the province of Canterbury have solemnly declared that they are 'resolved to maintain unimpaired the Catholic faith in the Holy Trinity and in the Incarnation, as contained in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, and in the *Quicunque Vult*, and regard the faith thus presented, both in statements of doctrine and in statements of fact, as the necessary basis on which the teaching of the church reposes.'

We must be very gentle with scrupulous and anxious consciences. We must be very patient with men under the searching and purifying trial of doubt. But when a man has once arrived at the steady conviction that he cannot honestly affirm a particular and unambiguous article of the creed, *in the sense which the church of which he is a minister undoubtedly gives to it*, the public mind of the church must tell him that he has a right to the freedom of his own opinion, but that he can no longer, consistently with public honour, hold the office of the ministry.[1]

[1] With regard to the minatory clauses of the *Quicunque*

But if a real assent of heart and will and intellect to the teaching of the creeds is required of the clergy, I think that substantially nothing else of a doctrinal kind is required of them. I mean that a man who believes the Creed is not likely to be troubled with any reasonable difficulty in making the doctrinal assent required of him when he is ordained, or when he accepts any particular charge in the church. He is required to profess that he 'assents to the Thirty-nine Articles and to the Book of Common Prayer, and to the Ordering of bishops, priests, and deacons; and that he believes the doctrine of the Church of England as therein set forth to be agreeable to the Word of God; and that in public prayer and administration of the sacraments he will use the form in the said book prescribed and none other, except so far as shall be ordered by lawful authority.'

Vult, the mind of the present church is practically unanimous in the sense which it intends them to bear. In reciting these clauses, with a large qualification which is not expressed, I am certainly only doing what the church which commissions me bids me to do. At the same time I think this unexpressed qualification is so considerable, and the fact that it is unexpressed leads to so much misunderstanding and scandal, that the clauses in question are unsuitable for public recitation

Time was when the clergy were required to profess a very much stricter adherence to the Articles. But the phraseology of the declaration was in 1867, by the combined authority of the Convocations and of Parliament, made much more general—i.e. an assent only to the doctrine as contained in a series of documents as a whole ; and I do not believe that any one who believes the fundamental creeds, and is conscientiously prepared to teach the Catechism, and to use the services authorized for common worship and the administration of the sacraments, ought to have any reasonable scruple in accepting the ministry in the Church of England.[1]

[1] Of one more scruple, that arising out of the declaration required by those who are to be ordained deacons, as to faith in the Scriptures, I have spoken in my charge on *The Spiritual Efficiency of the Church* (Murray, 1904), pp. 70, 71: 'We are required, before we can be admitted to the order of deacons, to express our "unfeigned belief in all the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments"; but that expression of belief can be fairly and justly made by any one who believes heartily that the Bible as a whole records and contains the message of God in all its stages of delivery, and that each one of the books contains some element or aspect of this revelation. In other words, I "unfeignedly believe all the Scriptures," if I believe them to contain and embody the Word of God. This definition of the mean-

We need to make the doctrinal position of the Church of England, both as to its central requirement upon its ministers, and as to the differences of opinion which it allows, much more explicit and clearly understood than it is at present.

The Church of England requires its ministers to mean what they say when, as leaders of the congregation, they recite the central creeds of Christendom, or say 'I believe.'

They are required to accept the position of the Church of England as stated in its formularies and services in general, and to be able to use conscientiously the forms of worship and administration of the sacraments which are of authority, and to teach the catechism.

They are required to give a special

ing of the question I have often repeated. I am delighted to find that it agrees with the definition given by one who was the weightiest opponent of what is commonly called the Higher Criticism—I mean the late Bishop of Oxford. "That is the sum of the sense in which you may interpret this question according to the *intentio imponentis*: do you believe the Holy Scripture as the Word of life, as containing in the Old and New Testaments the revelation of the purpose and work of Almighty God through Jesus Christ our Lord?"' See Stubbs, *Ordination Addresses* (Longmans), pp. 404, 1.

promise to teach out of the Scriptures, and to lay nothing upon their hearers, as binding upon their faith, except what is contained in Scripture.

This gives us a sufficient basis for doctrinal unity, and gives room for different 'schools of thought,' such as have existed and will exist, within the church; but all upon the basis of the great agreement, which should be constantly made evident.

If these simple principles are, as I believe they are, of general acceptance amongst us, it would be an immense gain if they could be explicitly and constantly declared, so that it should be known throughout Christendom what we really stand both to require and to allow.

In the matter of ritual, we require each of our clergy, whenever he undertakes a public charge, to promise, in public prayers and administration of the sacraments, to use only the services of the Prayer Book, except so far as lawful authority (which must mean for him, at least the authority of the bishop) allows some additional or exceptional prayers. This is to secure that in all our churches the same services shall be rendered, and intelligently and intel-

ligibly rendered; and may be so interpreted as to admit of wide variety in the ceremonial exhibition of the services, with due regard to the feelings of congregations, and due regard to such explicit directions, as to the meaning of which there is no doubt, as the Prayer Book contains.

Here again we need to make as explicit as possible both our basis of unity and our limits of comprehension. But we are concerned now only with our standards of doctrine.

It is a great advantage to stand simply on the ancient creeds. If we look in the direction of the Nonconformists, we cannot fail to see the difficulty in which they find themselves as regards standards of doctrine. They have stood, in their origin and during their past history, on the old Protestant orthodoxy, of which the corner-stone was the dogma of the infallibility and sole authority of Scripture. And it is precisely this position which recent criticism has rendered most untenable. Historical inquiry has replaced the canon of Scripture in its context as part of the same formative growth with the creeds and the episcopal successions—part of the same growth, and resting

upon the same authority. It has become more and more difficult to maintain the authority of the Bible, as a standard of doctrine, apart from the authority of the creeds and mind of the church. And still more it has become impossible to maintain the proposition of the infallibility of all the statements of Scripture, simply because they are in Scripture. During the recent discussion of the New Theology there have been signs of a wide-spread anxiety among Nonconformists, who feel the perils of the 'down-grade' movement, as to the standard of doctrine. There is nothing which in this respect can rival the ancient creeds.

On the other hand, we hold a position of immense advantage, as compared to the Roman Church, in being free from the encumbrance of dogmas or doctrines which it is not lawful to deny, but which are a grievous offence to the critical spirit. For instance, the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary is in the strictest sense binding upon the faith of Roman Catholics. It is, if true, an event in history; but its proclamation as a dogma rests on no sort of historical evidence or even tradition,—on nothing except the flimsy foundation of

a logic of the *a priori* sort which is most fallible, the sort of logic which seeks to determine, apart from evidence, how things must have happened. Again, the Roman Church celebrates, on one of its festivals of greatest solemnity and obligation, the assumption of the body of Mary into heaven: again a supposed event, which rests upon nothing which can be called historical evidence.

Once more, the central authority in the Roman Church has repeatedly, of recent years, sought to fasten upon those in its communion the obligation to hold for true every statement of Scripture—to hold the doctrine of verbal inspiration in its completest form. The late Pope, Leo XIII., in his Encyclical 'On the Study of Sacred Scripture'—issued in 1893—wrote thus with absolute decision and complete authoritativeness of tone:

> It is absolutely wrong and forbidden, either to narrow inspiration to certain parts only of Holy Scripture, or to admit that the sacred writer has erred. For the system of those who, in order to rid themselves of these difficulties, do not hesitate to concede that divine inspiration regards the things of faith and morals, and nothing beyond, because (as

they wrongly think) in a question of the truth or falsehood of a passage, we should consider, not so much what God has said, as the reason and purpose which He had in mind in saying it—this system cannot be tolerated. For all the books which the Church receives as sacred and canonical are written, wholly and entirely, with all their parts, at the dictation of the Holy Ghost; and so far is it from being possible that any error can co-exist with inspiration, that inspiration not only is essentially incompatible with error, but excludes and rejects it as absolutely and necessarily as it is impossible that God Himself, the supreme Truth, can utter that which is not true.

Hence, because the Holy Ghost employs men as His instruments, we cannot, therefore, say that it was these inspired instruments who, perchance, have fallen into error, and not the primary Author. For, by supernatural power, He so moved and impelled them to write—He was so present to them—that the things which He ordered, and those only, they first rightly understood, then willed faithfully to write down, and finally expressed in apt words and with infallible truth. Otherwise it could not be said that He was the Author of the entire Scripture.

It follows that those who maintain that an error is possible in any genuine passage of the sacred writings either pervert the catholic notion of inspiration or make God the author of such error.

And the recent decree *Lamentabili sane* condemns, among a number of other pro-

positions, the proposition (xi.) that 'divine inspiration is not so to be extended to the whole of sacred Scripture as that it should preserve from all mistake all and each of its parts.'[1]

We have enough difficulties and shortcomings of our own in the Church of England. We do well to be humble and penitent. But we do well also to be thankful that, while we have preserved our standing-ground upon the ancient and catholic faith and system of the church, we are exempt from dogmas and proclamations of authority which offer such tremendous obstacles to the critical judgement and the freedom of historical inquiry.

What we need, then—we of the Church of England—is to make clearer to our own minds, and then to the minds of others, the basis of solid agreement on which we stand, on the ground of which we are able to allow, and ought to be able to allow, without confusion, a wide comprehension and freedom of opinion.

If this could be more clearly defined and realized we could for the most part let our

[1] The recent encyclical of the present Pope re-emphasizes this position.

stale controversies drop for a while, and set ourselves to our great practical tasks, the task of witnessing for Christ abroad in the great non-Christian world ; and, within Christendom, here in our own country, the task of moral witness.

We are passing through a great crisis. The whole industrial and social fabric is in process of change. The movement that is becoming dominant is what is more or less vaguely called socialist. At the heart of it is a great cry for justice, for a more equitable division of the proceeds of industry ; for a better life for the masses of the people ; for a greater regard for each individual life, and especially for those who are too weak to help themselves. Now this is a movement with which the Christian Church ought to have at heart the profoundest sympathy. The Bible is full of the cry for justice, full of resentment at the oppression of the poor. It cannot tolerate the exploiting of the weak by the strong. It is, indisputably, in the age-long struggle of rich and poor, on the side of the poor.[1] But all its great social force—its great wealth of social teaching—has been with-

[1] In development of this phrase see Sermon v., p. 274.

drawn into the background. It has to be brought to the fore again, and set to work within every Christian conscience and in every portion of the Christian church. It is the witness of Christianity which is most needed by the men of to-day.

What is wanted is not the alliance of Christianity with a political party, nor the judgement of Christianity on an economic theory; but the study by Christians of their principles; the preaching by Christians of the real moral meaning of their brotherhood, with its sacraments of fellowship; the reassertion in a society which calls itself Christian of the obligations of justice and righteousness.[1]

The doctrines of the creed which we have been considering—the doctrines of God and of Christ, of human destiny and sin and redemption—are precisely the sources from which the Christian church derives its insight and force to aid in social reconstruc-

[1] In elucidation of these phrases I am venturing to reprint (see p. 297) the recent report of the Committee of the Southern Convocation and House of Laymen on *The Moral Witness of the Church on Economic Subjects*, as giving in some sense a corporate expression of the church's mind, which is much more valuable than that of an individual.

tion. The deficiencies and perils of the contemporary labour movement are sufficiently conspicuous to those who look at it from outside. If the church were only alive and at work in the hearts of the people, with its fundamental moral witness well to the fore, it might supply, or it ought to supply, the moral force and purity which the movement for social redemption assuredly needs. It can supply also, under all circumstances tending to depression and despair, the confidence of its certain hope.

Science, strictly so called—it cannot be too often reiterated—has no gospel. It affords us no assurance whatever against the deterioration of our race, or its extinction.[1] It takes impartial cognizance of the downward as well as the upward road. 'Science,' says a striking modern writer,[2] 'has promised us the truth, or at least the knowledge of such relations as our intelligence can seize; she has never promised us either peace or happiness. Sovereignly indifferent to our feelings, she does not hear our lamentations. We must try and live

[1] See Huxley's emphatic declarations, cited below, p. 240.

[2] Le Bon, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

with her, since nothing can bring back the illusions which she has banished.'

But 'science' is not our only road to truth. And if the faith in Jesus Christ is grounded in truth and reason, as we may be assured it is, we have in that faith the supreme safeguard of human hopes; in Christ upon His throne, the ultimate security of human destiny. Beyond all the decays of civilization, and all the shocks of worlds, there is 'the far-off, divine event,' the establishment of the kingdom of Christ, in which all the transitory disclosures of truth and power and beauty in the world, all the achievements and intimations of human thought and human character, are to be brought together and consummated in the City of God, under the new heaven and upon the new earth, where God is all in all.

This security of human hopes is bound up with the faith in God as Christ revealed Him, and with the revelation of divine purpose for nature and man which is given in summary and prophetic form in His person and life and resurrection and triumph. 'There shall never be one lost good.'

There, where Christ is on the throne, is

the anchor of our hopes, and there is the continual warning which hangs over our individual lives and our civilization. All that will allow itself to belong to Christ, all that will admit His redemption, will be, quickly or slowly, gathered under His feet, and into His body—all the real riches of humanity, 'the glory and honour of all nations.' The city of God is thus the assured goal of humanity. The divine purpose will surely effect itself. But how much of the redeeming purpose can be carried out in our lives and in our civilization depends upon ourselves. Our share in the great consummation, as individuals, or as a nation, or as a church, depends upon our faithfulness in allegiance to Christ.

I say, faithfulness in allegiance to Christ. But we must include in allegiance to Christ, the unconscious allegiance which is in the heart of all those who are following the best light they have. We Christians are sure that all honest inquiry after the truth, and all loyal following of what in our consciences we know and feel to be the best, will one day, if not in this life, yet beyond it, be rewarded with the vision of God and the knowledge of Christ. The refusal of the

light, the declining from what we know to be right, is common enough in human life. That must separate us from Christ. But nothing else can be under His condemnation. He is the light that lighteneth every man in conscience, even those who know Him not, or who cannot bring themselves to acknowledge Him, because He has been misinterpreted to them. Thus He is the goal of all the strivings after good in the world. There is none other name given among men whereby we must be saved, than the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

SERMONS

SERMON I

THE CREED AND COMMON LIFE [1]

In that hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes: yea, Father, for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight.—*St. Luke* x. 21.

NOTHING is more instructive than to consider the method of influencing men which is exhibited in the coming of the Christ. Any one who is, even in the vaguest and most general sense, a Christian, must believe that the divine providence is exhibited in the conditions of His coming: that it was 'by a determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.' It is then, I say, most instructive to consider how the wisdom of God set aside, in the circumstances of our Lord's coming, all the opportunities and methods of influencing men which the

[1] A sermon preached at Great St. Mary's before the University of Cambridge, on Oct. 21, 1906.

imagination of men would have suggested. Thus Christ did not come so as to command any of the instruments of secular greatness—as some great king or emperor or powerful person. Again, he did not come as a philosopher, or so as to have command of the influences of learning. Once more, He did not come so as to fulfil Plato's hope of one who should combine both the accepted means of influence—that is, as a philosopher-king. He was born in circumstances which do not suggest any opportunities of wide influence: in an outlying and despised district of a subject-kingdom, just about to become more subject. There was, indeed, nothing squalid about His origin. He was born in a family which nursed noble memories and noble hopes—'of the seed of David according to the flesh'; but in the circle of labouring men. And in the main it was in the same circle—in the circle of labouring people of the best and most respectable kind—that He found His disciples and His agents. He did, indeed—if we believe, as I am sure we ought to believe, the Fourth Gospel—give the natural rulers of His people—the classes of Jews who sat in the seats of authority at Jeru-

salem—their opportunity of hearing and accepting His message. But their refusal compelled Him or (should we say ?) left Him free to found His church in Galilee, where the tradition of learning was weak, where He could build upon the unsophisticated basis of honest human nature in its simplest form. And in doing this He knew what He was doing, and knew that the divine wisdom was in it. 'I thank Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and reveal them unto babes: yea, Father, for so it was well-pleasing in Thy sight.' That is the thanksgiving of the Son of Man, who recognizes that the real influence upon the world must start not from the traditions of learning, academic or ecclesiastical, but from the religious consecration of the common life of labouring people.

St. Paul, whose prejudices went in the opposite direction, was brought to acknowledge the same divine principle.[1] 'It is written: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the prudence of the prudent will I reject. Where is the wise? Where is

[1] 1 Cor. i. 19 ff.

the scribe? Where is the disputer of the world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe. Seeing that Jews ask for signs and Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumbling-block and unto Greeks foolishness. . . . For the foolishness of God is wiser than men.' Then he points, in evidence of his exultant recognition of the method of God, to the actual composition of the Corinthian church. The 'important people' were practically left out. It was precisely to this that the hostile critic of Christianity, Celsus the philosopher, called attention more than a hundred years later, when he says: 'Christians must admit that they can only persuade people destitute of sense, position, or intelligence, only slaves, women, and children, to accept their faith.' He is only calling attention to the method of the divine wisdom; to the fact which was disclosed to the world by Christianity, that the people who are really important are the common

labouring people, who have neither time nor means for much learning, and that the true influence, the divine wisdom, must proceed from the basis of the common life redeemed or consecrated.

There is a close analogy between the relation of Christ to learning and His relation to political influence. He deliberately repudiated the political method; He inculcated upon the poor and the oppressed —not rebellion or agitation, but obedience, submission, indifference. He founded a community which was reviled because it conspicuously 'took no part in politics.' But it was a community of human love and mutual help. Therefore it effected an immense social change, and produced the profoundest effect on the politics of the world, as we may say, without intending it. The meek possessed the earth.

So it was with learning. The schools and the academies felt themselves, not unnaturally, disparaged and repudiated by this new community; and they derided them accordingly in their natural confidence. But this community was, after all, made up of human beings; they had intelligences and talked the language of their time. They

could not help explaining themselves to themselves and to the world outside—explaining themselves, and moreover defending against attacks the truth which was their life. They must, in doing this, use the intellectual weapons ready to their hand, they must talk the language of their time, the language of intellectual Greece. So their 'love' did marvellously, according to St. Paul's prayer, 'abound in knowledge.' The devotion and ethical life and religious faith of the earliest Christian church worked out into a self-conscious theology, which took up and used the intellectual implements of Greece, just as the church, in another region, used the political organization of Rome. The process is really unique in history, because it is so *corporate*: so little due to any one man or group of men. As an individual by being cross-questioned about his instinctive opinions—Do you mean this? Are you prepared to accept this conclusion? Can you make terms with this proposal?—as an individual by being so cross-questioned gradually grows to know his own mind exactly, so it was with the church. There is not, I think, in the history of mankind

any like example of the practical spirit of a whole community making for itself an intellectual expression.

It was not the influence of any one man, for instance St. Paul, imposing a philosophy upon the church. St. Paul's most original contribution to thought—his theory of the function of the law, and of the relation of law to grace, of which we hear so much in his Epistles—produced surprisingly little effect upon the church for fifteen centuries after his death, in spite of Augustine's effort to popularize it. It was the common mind, the common devotion, that expressed itself in the creeds and in the theology of the church. What really defeated Arianism, like the other heresies, was the clear and enthusiastic Christian faith that the Lord Christ was really God. A fathomless gulf distinguishes the Creator from the creature, God from man; and they were sure that Christ by His essential nature was Creator and not creature. It has been recently argued, as if it were a matter of great moment, that the *Homoousios*[1] dogma was finally accepted at Constantinople in the

[1] The dogma that the Son is of one substance with the Father.

sense of the Cappadocian divines, Basil and the Gregories, and not in the sense of its first champion Athanasius. As a matter of fact, the argument seems to be very disputable ; but what is of chief importance is to observe that the church as a whole was occupied in a practical task—in affirming that it could make no terms with anything that impugned the true, proper Godhead of its Lord, or of the Holy Spirit, or that introduced the idea of more Gods than one. It therefore maintained the Trinity of co-equal Persons in the unity of the Godhead. So it found itself enthusiastically confessing. But it had no independent philosophical interest in the precise terms used to defend its faith. And, as to the differences between Athanasius and the Cappadocians, they were more than covered by the confession of all the wisest minds in Christendom, that men could not define God—that their definitions would always be baffled by His glory.

The use of dogmas was to hedge round and protect the practical creed. They were negative. That is to say, their first object was to say 'No' to what was repugnant to the practical worship and to the common

mind of faith. And it follows that till men lost the sense of the end in the pursuit of means, they felt that the fewer dogmas they laid down and the nearer they kept to Scripture terms the better. But, of course, just as Christianity, having used secular organization became enslaved to it; so, having used terms and method of philosophy, it came to misuse them as religious ends in themselves, and was carried far away from the purposes of Christian life and faith into a region of dogmatic definitions which 'ministered questionings' rather than Christian faith and hope and love.

I return to my point. Christianity devoted itself to the consecration of the common life of working people. This life, to express and protect itself, must perforce develop a theology, a learning, a wisdom. But the strength of this early intellectual system of Christianity lay in its unacademical origin; in its remaining in very close relation to the common life of common people—to their simple worship, their moral wants and satisfactions, their sorrows and joys and labours. This is to say, in other words, that the early dogmatic method of Christianity was scriptural and true to Scripture,

which is practical, moral and devotional, not theoretical or academic.

Scholars sometimes contemplate the revision of the ancient catholic creeds and fundamental dogmas. They say—are we not endowed with all that our fathers were endowed with? Can we not, now that philosophy has changed its terms and methods, revise the ancient formulas, or do over again, for our age, what they did so well for theirs? There is much to say with regard to a proposition which sounds so reasonable. But at least this may be said: Can you suggest any other or better terms to express the same things, or is it the case that it is not the terms but the fundamental mind that you want altered? If the church is right in believing that Christ is God, the Creator, who for our redemption from the universal dominion of sin was made man; and did redeem a fallen world by His life and passion and resurrection and ascension; and did by His Spirit, sent down out of His glorified manhood at Pentecost, regenerate and unite to God in Himself the children of faith all over the world, through the visible society of redeemed men which He founded with its visible symbols

and sacraments of brotherhood,—if this, and nothing short of this, is what you want to express, can you then, on this hypothesis, suggest better terms to guard this faith? or can you show that such terms have not served their purpose? or are not now needed? or can you even show to be unnecessary any one of those four definitions which the church universal has made binding?[1]

I think the answer is No. For, whenever I come to examine the intention of the critics of the church's terminology, I seem always to find that they want not to improve the defences, but to abandon the fortress. They want to allow the divinity of Christ to mean something which would be true in its measure of every other man: whereas the very object of the church was to maintain the divinity of Christ in a sense in which it could not possibly be applied to any created being. Or they want to weaken the other absolutely vital element

[1] (1) That Christ is of one substance with the Father; (2) that He was completely human; (3) that His humanity had no independent centre of personality in itself; (4) but that in the unity of the one divine person both Godhead and manhood remain, two natures in one person.

in the common Christian faith and thought —viz. the belief in the universal corruption or disorder of human nature and the fact that every single human being needs not progress only, but recovery. I, for one, believe with the profoundest conviction, that the hopes of humanity are bound up with the maintenance of the real Godhead of Christ, the reality of our fallen state, and the universal need for redemption. But at least, whatever our religious opinions, let us admit that the church, in choosing her theological terms, was choosing terms to guard exactly that line of demarcation which it is now proposed to obliterate. What is at stake is not an academic question of terms, but a question which belongs essentially to the common Christian life of experience and worship. It is in practical belief and worship that men adore Christ as their creator, as well as redeemer ; and in practical self-knowledge or penitence that they know the doctrine of innate sin and the need for the new birth.

1. Christianity, then, in matters of intellect as in social influence generally, works upwards from below. That is its essential method. It does not lay its basis in learn-

ing, or make its start from the learned. Where it attempts this it forsakes the method of Christ. Rather, it exults to recognize in the common life of labouring people and their practical needs that which is really most important, that which is the chief pillar and ground of religious truth. In the propagation of Christianity, then, the Christian does not weep, but rather exults, with St. Paul and Christ Himself, if the learned of any community hold aloof or reject, while the poor accept. It is what we seem to be witnessing in India to-day. I do not know what the witness of your Cambridge Mission at Delhi would be at this moment. The witness of our Oxford Mission is that the twenty-five years of its experience coincides with a manifest hardening of the educated Indian mind against Christianity. The hopes entertained of the coming to Christ of the Indians of caste and position have for the present died down. There are almost no conversions of educated natives. But meanwhile, especially in the South of India, a great and rapidly increasing Christian community is forming itself chiefly from the pariah population; and these despised

classes are showing themselves capable of an earnest devotion, of an education and a progress, which Indian opinion contemptuously regarded as impossible for them. And, if we are faithful to the anticipations of the apostolic age, we shall not be surprised or apologetic. Rather, we shall thank the Father and Lord of heaven and earth, because He has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes.

2. Again, however long the history of Christianity had been in any country, it still remains true that the strength of any church lies in the common labouring life. It is in being strong there—with the manual worker—that any national church retains the power to show its original spirit and the power of recuperation and revival. In the same way, in any settled Christian community, the strength of its theology and Christian learning depends on its being in the closest relations with popular piety and religious life and the teaching needed for common people. This was the case with the Christian learning and theology of the first five or six Christian centuries. It was so closely in touch with popular devotion

that it was able to maintain a real control over the superstition which always accompanies popular religion. It ceased to be so with the scholasticism of the later Middle Age. A loud cry arose in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries for a simplification of theology—for a return to what practically mattered. The cry in part took effect in the Reformation. But in England, in spite of Hugh Latimer, the Reformation, as it was expressed in the Prayer Book and Articles, never succeeded in holding or winning the popular heart. The Established Church has always had this great weakness: that it has worked downwards from above, rather than upwards from below. It has been so with our Anglican theology. In our age theological and biblical learning has mainly started from a critical, and therefore necessarily an academic, platform. It has not had the popular devotion and faith behind it. Popular piety has in fact commonly resented its conclusions. Where it has not done this, it has been apt to pursue its own course apart. As one who has had to live in both worlds—the world of theological learning and that of practical religious life—may I bear my witness?

There is a great world of practical religious devotion, Catholic and Evangelical, in England to-day, which expresses itself in oral teaching, in catechism, manuals, prayers, and hymns. But I feel painfully that it is further off than it ought to be from our theological or biblical science, as it is represented at our universities—that the popular pulpit use of the Bible in our communion is still very generally based upon critical instruments which might long ago have been exchanged for better and truer, if the learned world had been in closer touch with the common religion. For in Christianity it is the common religion which has the prerogative place. Christian learning is meant to react upon it only because it first of all has experienced its meaning and needs, and proceeded out from it. May I respectfully say to those who are the representatives of religious learning, that they should set it before themselves as a deliberate aim to associate themselves as deeply as possible with the common devotional life of Christianity as it exists in the church to-day; so that they may learn to do, more effectively than is being done to-day, what is the real business of Christian learn-

ing—viz. to help and guide the common life, as they only can do who, besides their critical learning, know and feel the supremacy of the soul's practical need, who know what will shock it, what will help it, what will hinder—who know what it will welcome, and before what it will fall back distressed, perplexed, and scandalized.

May I give a single example? From countless pulpits there is still taught the doctrine of the Fall of Man in a manner which conflicts with what almost every educated person believes to be the matter of fairly certain science. On the other side we have a scientific doctrine of human development and a theory of 'sin' which is very often associated with a lamentable ignorance of the most certain experiences of Christian souls and of the Christian church—those experiences which (almost more than anything else) have ministered to man's moral progress. What we need is men of learning who have first of all passed through or sympathetically entered into the Christian knowledge of sin, and felt its profound relation to all that makes the Christian hope; and who *then*, with this in their minds, will study scientific facts and ethno-

logical data. No one who really studies the original function of Christian 'wisdom' can say that this is a task alien to it.

Moreover, criticism working by itself teaches us, I think, its own limits. It was necessary for the sake of intellectual liberty that it should, to start with, work on its own pure lines. By working on its own pure lines it has (I must believe) reconstructed, for instance, Old Testament criticism and some departments of church history. In these regions the task of the mediator to-day is, so to study the religious needs and feelings of common people as gradually to accommodate the devout use of the Bible to the standard of science. But does not criticism by its own action upon its own lines reach its limits? Does it not to many of us become constantly more and more apparent, in dealing for example with the miracles of the New Testament, and in particular with those singled out as corner-stones of faith in the Apostles' Creed, that the determination of truth cannot rest with the critical estimate of evidence alone? We have worked very hard at it. We have sifted it very thoroughly. Many of us would say that, on

the whole, it is those who deny or doubt the occurrence of the miraculous facts who do violence to the evidence. But short of such a position, must not any one admit that the state of the evidence, as based on historical documents, is such that the question whether Christ's body was really transformed on the third day, and rose a spiritualized body, leaving the tomb vacant, does depend for each man on the question of probability, and this is a question of what the practical religious need, which God was confessedly meeting, really required and requires?

Again, the question of whether we have reason justifying the church in teaching that Christ was born of a virgin, depends, even more, on considerations of what must, or need not, be regarded as probable, in the case of one recognized as incarnate Son of God and sinless Son of Man. I feel that the critic, merely as critic, ought to be at pains to find out why I, a struggling human soul, declare, with the profoundest conviction, that the strength of the appeal of the Christ to me is bound up, as with His character and claim, so with His physical resurrection and virgin birth. The world—great nature—

seems, day by day, so morally indifferent. It is the hardest thing, in work-a-day life, to believe that what is really supreme is the moral will and the moral issue. The human soul finds consolation, instinctively, in a miracle because it makes plain that the sovereign power in nature is really God the Father—that the moral will is really supreme in and over nature. All over the world, from the first, and still to-day, the common consciousness of man cries out, that the question of miracle at the great crisis of redemption makes all the difference between a speculative hope and a joyous confidence. And if God's providence had to do with Christ and His appearance, if God had a practical purpose, then the need of the human soul must have a real place in that estimate of probability, which, in the peculiar setting of the evidence, really becomes the determining factor, or (as I should prefer to express it) which is necessary to break down the barriers which the critical mind, in its isolation from common moral wants, erects against the real force of the evidence. For the sake of criticism and for the sake of common religion, I plead for a reconsideration of

the original or true relation of Christian knowledge to the common Christian life—if Christian worship and faith, on the one hand, is not to become superstitious, and criticism, on the other, barren. I plead with the student to make it his business to study with a more continuous sympathy the religion by the help of which common people—Christ's own special folk—are worshipping and bearing their troubles, gaining victories, and obtaining relief.

3. Lastly, I would try to speak a word to any young man who has come to Cambridge with a strict faith, learned at home and centred in the Bible, only to find after a while that he cannot simply say, 'This statement is true because it is in the Bible'; and that he needs a more solid basis for his faith than the Bible taken as a book by itself can supply, and more authoritative and consistent than the opinions of individual teachers. I would say to such an one: You have got to reconstruct your spiritual fabric; you have got to use all the helps you can. Amongst these is the intellectual material. You must then trust your intellect; you must face the facts; you must try your best to use your mind.

Moreover, I cannot doubt that your wisdom is to go back to the centre, to the question of Christ, and, letting all else for the moment go, ask yourself what you, with your own best mind and judgement, give as your answer to the question—What thinkest thou of Christ? You are not infallible. But, in the state in which you are, with the conflicting voices around you, you are responsible for using your own mind and taking the intellectual trouble necessary to making it up. So many young Englishmen simply drift away from faith through laziness, through shrinking from doing their intellectual best. They do—what nothing can intellectually justify: that is, they take their doubts on authority. They doubt because other people doubt.

But intellectual inquiry is not all. I have known many who, thank God, have come back out of mental chaos into clear faith; and in the case of almost no one of these have the intellectual considerations been finally determining. It has been love, or sorrow, which has opened some window in their being or set some spring aflow. Or it has been the humiliation of a moral fall which has brought a

deeper self-knowledge. Or it has been the experience of what they needed in order to help others that has brought them to know their own need. You cannot hurry these experiences. But you can resolve not to be a hypocrite—never to let your doubts excuse you from making the best practical use of what religious conviction you still possess. It is a great thing to believe in God. Do not delay to be a devout Theist while you are determining whether you can be a good Christian. But also keep it from the first in mind that it is the strength and not the weakness of Christianity—it is the divine wisdom—which from the first has made it assign to knowledge and the activity of the intellect the second place and not the first, which has made it say that the really powerful thing in humanity for getting at religious truth is the common human soul, as it sets itself, not to be learned, but to struggle, or live, or love. And your power of appreciating Christianity, with the appreciation which is necessary for intellectual sympathy, will depend upon the depth and reality of your spiritual experience, will depend upon your sense of sin and of the

need of pardon, your fellowship in the desire to know and love God and obtain purity of heart and divine communion. Yes, and before your own spiritual experience is deep enough to be conscious of its own needs, you can have clearly in mind what it is that in St. Paul and St. John and in millions of great and little Christians since then, has made up the mind and heart of Christendom ; what it is that has given the motive to its faith and inspired its hope and love ; and you can realize that the real strength of Christianity lies in awaking and satisfying the common needs of simple people. 'I thank Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and prudent, and reveal them unto babes.'

SERMON II

THE PERMANENT CREED[1]

Whosoever goeth onward, and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son.—2 *St. John* 9.

THE time we live in is a time of widespread religious unsettlement. It would, indeed, be hard to exaggerate the uncertainty of belief in many classes of society. This is due in part to what is our weakness—that the faculty of criticism far outruns the constructive faculty of our minds; and that in a period of diffused education the materials of criticism are presented to all kinds of minds, and are sufficient to overturn positive beliefs without leading on to any reconstruction. But it is also due to what is a legitimate matter for thankfulness—namely, that

[1] A sermon preached before the University of Oxford on November 13, 1904, and previously published. It was preached and published some years before the activity of the New Theology began.

there has been a wide extension of scientific and historical knowledge; and this widening of the intellectual horizon, with the accompanying change in the methods and categories of men's thought, almost necessarily carries with it religious unsettlement. The creed that had associated itself with the forms of thought of the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, must have a difficulty in adjusting itself to the history and science of the nineteenth and the twentieth. We cannot evade this difficulty. There are, indeed, those who think the only proper way to meet religious unsettlement and scepticism is to hold fast by religious belief as we have received it from our grandmother Lois and our mother Eunice, without concessions or readaptations. To allow mistakes in the common teaching of the church is said to be dangerous. Concession is regarded as only the first step to surrender, and parleying is only the prelude to treason. But, in fact, experience shows us in the past that religion in a settled age becomes encrusted with ideas which do not properly belong to the permanent creed, but to the thought of the

time ; and when a turn of the wheel of thought takes place, those ideas associated with the essential religion, but not of its essence, have finally to be discarded, that the religion may exercise its true strength once more. We cannot reasonably deny that permanent religion at every period is associated with impermanent elements, the gold with the dross, and we must have the intellectual courage to seek to dissociate the two, and to draw distinctions between essential and unessential, and to make concessions, and to seek readjustment. On the other hand are the men who seem to think that every clever new criticism is destined to triumph over an established idea ; and they need reminding that the conservative tendencies of the human mind, and the recuperative power of old truth and old institutions, have disappointed revolutionists at every period. We are not, then, to refuse to reconsider, and to abandon what is untenable, and to readjust the old and the new, any more than we are to abandon the old merely because the new is clamorously asserting itself. We have to consider frankly and estimate carefully. The question is a real and

living one for us. Granted that in current religion, in the common religious tradition, there are permanent and impermanent elements, there are essential and unessential factors, how are we to distinguish the one from the other? What tests have we by which we can ascertain what is the real and permanent Christian creed, what is really revelation of God, truth permanent and divine?

Now, the test which is practically the most convincing is also the least producible in argument: it is what may be called the mystical, or subjective, test. The religious truth that we hold with most confidence for permanent and divine is what, in some sense, by inner spiritual experience we feel we *know*. We know that our conviction of right and wrong, of duty to be done at whatever cost of pain to ourselves, is far stronger than the intellectual grounds by which we can justify it. Or, again, we have from time to time *felt* the presence of God in response to prayer, or in blessing upon a difficult duty loyally done, or in time of sorrow or joy. God is, and we have felt Him. We know that He is there, though all the proofs are

ineffectual and inadequate. Or, again, the question of Christ's Godhead is for me beyond controversy. 'No man can say Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost'; but there is such a thing as the movement of the divine Spirit in the soul of man. I have heard Christ's words, and have read of His deeds in the Gospels, and my whole soul acknowledges in Him perfect God in perfect manhood. I have felt His presence in Holy Communion. I know He died for me. He has forgiven me. I am His and He is mine. Argument is unsatisfying. But I know by a conviction inseparable from my own personality that this is the Christ, the saviour of the world; and that in worshipping Him as God I am only doing my rational duty; and that He is with us all the days, even unto the end of the world. As to the miracles, I can see in them but the most natural actions, or accompaniments, of His person.

This is personal conviction. It is something far deeper than the intellectual presentation which it can give of itself. It is deep experience, which seems to render argument needless. And we may truly say that, whatever the means by which

religious belief is generated—whether authority, or evidence, or logical reasoning—it never becomes belief worthy of the name till it has become in some degree experience, till the Spirit of God has wrought it into the fibre of my personal consciousness, and I feel and know that He is God. So far as we have really believed in this deep sense, the intellectual evidence for our faith is rather the light it throws on the whole of life and the whole of knowledge than any light that it receives from other fields of experience or investigation. It convinces more and more by giving light, rather than is proved by receiving it.

But this sort of inner conviction is bound, if not for its own sake, then for that of others, to give a reason for itself. In itself it is not transmissible. It cannot be imparted. But it is a part of a great corporate conviction which has belonged to the whole Christian society, and it must strive to give itself corporate expression. What is it convinces me, apart from my own incommunicable experience, or as the prelude and way to such experience, or as the result of it, that such and such a statement is really part of the message of God to man ?

To return to our original question—since so many things have been taught as Christian truth, and afterwards proved false or uncertain, how do I propose, by more or less objective and producible tests, to distinguish essential Christianity from the variable or uncertain or false accompaniments of it?

I

The first, and to some minds the most obvious, test is that of authority in its broadest sense. There has been a common, a universal, faith of Christendom, which has, most authoritatively, expressed itself in the catholic creeds, the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds. There are, indeed, features in the common faith, such as the belief in the atonement, in sacramental grace, in the inspiration of Scripture, which are only slightly or by implication touched on in these formulas of faith; but at least in what they contain they represent what has been universal Christianity. Hardly anything has been nobly or effectively done, or bravely suffered, for the name of Christ, that has not been done or suffered in the

profession of these creeds, or the profession of the faith which preceded them. The great movement of humanity which gives glory to Christ as its redeemer, as it traverses the ages and spreads over the world, has confessed itself in these terms almost without exception. Since the Reformation, differences have sundered the visible Christian society into fragments; emphasis has been laid on one point in this body and on another in that; but Calvinist and Lutheran, Anglican, Romanist, Greek, and Russian have confessed the same faith in the Holy Trinity, one God; in Christ, perfect God and perfect man; in His birth of a virgin and life and death for man, and His resurrection and ascension; in the descent of the Spirit and the formation of the church; the fellowship of the saints; the forgiveness of sins; in judgement to come, and everlasting life. We pass back behind the Reformation to the Middle Ages, and behind the Middle Ages to the centuries of the Councils, and back to the earlier Fathers; we note the differences of Alexandria and Antioch and Rome and Africa; but they do not touch this common Creed. Even separated heretical

bodies, like the Nestorians, seem, so far as the bulk of them is concerned, to have been separated, not from the faith, but, by an accident of mismanaged controversy, from a misunderstood term of theology. And the great Creed finds its justification in the theology of the Epistles and its verification in the words and deeds of Christ in the Gospels. Criticism loves to dwell on differences ; but the real unity is unmistakable. And it is a mistake, surely, if we never let this broad and massive unity of the Christian faith make its proper impression upon us. The modern student, in his desire to dive below the surface, or in his passion for original work, may bury himself prematurely in some forgotten corner of church history, some study of apocryphal Acts or anonymous and unpublished documents. Let him first tread the broad highway. Let him read the main texts first of all, as they can be read in mass and with rapidity, that the great general impression may be made upon him. There is, after all, a faith which has been held *semper, ubique, ab omnibus*, in such sense that what fragments of the Christian body have not held it hardly count in the total effect. What

records we have of human life redeemed and consecrated show it redeemed and consecrated in the profession of this faith; and what lies outside this profession can be left out of reckoning, without the general effect being altered, or the result for human life appreciably affected. And this impression of unity through all differences, and permeating all divisions, is impressive in a very high degree. It generates in the mind a sense of indissoluble coherence—a feeling that this creed and Christianity are one and the same thing; or that they stand to one another as root and fruit. There may be great differences between the Christian beliefs of the twentieth, and the tenth, and the fourth, and the second century, but the differences will not touch the great central body of faith.

II

But this brings us to the second test. This Creed professes to be based simply upon a revelation given, or given in its final form, through an historical person, Jesus Christ. It is a Creed based on facts, which are confessedly unique and, in part,

miraculous. As thus claiming an historical basis, it enters the region of historical criticism. It has always from the first taken its stand on testimony. And testimony must stand criticism. Moreover, for us to-day there is no testimony worth considering which is not in the New Testament. I say that it is impossible in any way to withdraw the historical basis of Christianity from the freest and frankest criticism. If there exist persons who say, Let the Old Testament be frankly criticized, for it is not so important, but not the New Testament, for it is vital; the claim must be utterly repudiated. In proportion to the important issues which hang upon the New Testament records, must be the frankness of the criticism to which they are subjected. And the Creed has no other line of defence behind the New Testament documents. It is sometimes suggested that we can hold that destructive criticism has done its work successfully upon the Gospels, but can still go on proclaiming our faith in Christ born of a virgin and risen from the dead, in Christ as God in manhood, on the authority of the church. I am sure this is not the case.

The authority of the church has always professed to rest on the authority of the apostles. It is rooted and based on their witness—their eye-witness. And the content of the apostolic witness 'as they delivered it unto us which from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word,' is to be found in its most authentic form in the Gospels, and a few other historical passages of the New Testament. It is very difficult to conceive any critical scholar supposing that, if the New Testament narratives are not sufficient to warrant us in believing that Jesus Christ was really born of a virgin, and really fed the five thousand with the five loaves, and was really raised from the dead the third day, there is any other witness which can support the statements, considered as records of actual events. Thus, as between M. Loisy and Professor Harnack, I cannot doubt that, if the critical results in which they substantially agree are accepted as scientific, we must go with Harnack and not with Loisy in our attitude towards the Creed.

Once again, the theology of the creed of Nicæa is only the making more explicit

what is already present in the theology of St. Paul and St. John. But I cannot believe that the theology of St. Paul and St. John could rank as more than a phase in the history of thought, if it were found that Christ Himself, as a matter of fact, made no such divine claim as, in different degrees, but with equal certainty, the Gospels record Him to have made. Thus we cannot refuse to enter the region of free criticism with our Gospels; nor can we pretend that the validity of our creeds is independent of the issue of such criticism. If the creeds stand, with their historical and doctrinal statements, it must be because the Gospels stand. I do not want a complete absence of inaccuracy or discrepancy in the Gospel narratives. I want only, if I am to believe the creeds, that the Gospels should stand as, in the fullest sense, trustworthy history.

Well, now, it is my conviction that no fair historical criticism can dissolve the force of the historical evidence we have to such propositions as the following: that Jesus Christ was, and knew Himself to be, sinless in the midst of a sinful world of which He came to be the saviour; that, moreover,

He encouraged in His disciples towards Himself, and claimed from them, the sort of allegiance and faith which only God can rightly claim, and which can only be rendered without impiety to God; that He worked miracles which no reasoning can allow us to ascribe to anything else than the creative power of God working with Him to authorize His teaching; that after His death and burial His tomb was found empty on the third (or, as we should say, the second) day, and His disciples were raised from despondency and despair to a sure faith and confident hope by repeated manifestations of Himself risen, in a body transformed and spiritualized, but the same. I am quite sure that it is those who disbelieve such propositions, and not those who believe them, who do violence to the evidence. Further, though the manner of our Lord's birth falls outside the period of His life of which the apostles were personal witnesses, and was not, therefore, among the grounds on which belief in Christ was asked; yet I see the best reasons for thinking that in the early circle of believers the fact of our Lord's birth of a virgin was believed on the evidence of the only first-

hand witnesses, Joseph and Mary, and that it is Joseph and Mary whose testimony is embodied in the first and third Gospels. I believe, therefore, that the faith of the Creed is supported by free inquiry into historical facts. And if I am asked how it is that 'the critics' reach a conclusion so different, I reply: At least in England, the strength of criticism—its strength in bulk and intellectual value—is on the conservative side. Also, I reply, that in the great majority of cases I seem to see most clearly that the destructive critics reach the results they reach, not from considerations properly historical, but because their mind is occupied with a certain view of the world which indisposes them to the conclusions of the Creed; just as, on the other hand, I am conscious that my own mind is filled with a certain belief in God, a certain view of sin, a certain expectation of divine redemption, which makes the evidence of the Gospels acceptable, which makes me susceptible of belief. I seem to see clearly enough that historical criticism, as applied to the Gospels, can take us a certain way without appealing to any presuppositions except what are shared by almost all

sensible men : as that the matter of the Synoptic Gospels dates almost entirely back behind the destruction of Jerusalem ; or that when St. Paul wrote his First Epistle to the Corinthians (A.D. 55), and, after reminding them in detail of his original teaching as to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, speaks of his own relation to the older apostles, and says, 'Wherefore, whether it were I or they, so we preach and so ye believed,' he could not have been conscious of any difference between his witness and theirs. I think, then, that we might very well reach almost universal agreement that the witness of the New Testament can be shown to have taken shape so early that it *may be* strictly historical—that it falls within the conditions which admit of good history. On the other hand, there remain discrepancies, obscurities, difficulties ; there remain the large gaps in the evidence, and the historical possibility that conjectures or mistakes might very rapidly have become imaginary memories. Thus it seems as if the question whether these recorded events actually happened, miraculous and supernatural as they are, will almost always be answered

in accordance with what a man's mind is as to the probabilities of divine action—in accordance with what he thinks is really credible or probable. We must all train ourselves in the very rare quality of submission to good evidence, when it runs contrary to our prejudices at any point. This quality is as rare among biblical critics as among men of the world; and as rare among sceptics as among believers. To train ourselves in it is a high intellectual duty. But at the end we are left acknowledging that a man's judgement, on the weight to be assigned to historical testimony, will be found in part depending on his general view of what is probable in this world, as he knows it.

III

And this brings me to my third test—the rational or logical—by which I would try to distinguish the essential or permanent from the unessential or impermanent elements in Christianity. It is the test of rational coherence.

There is a certain set of ideas, for example, which naturally arise on the consideration of the Christian religion in a

mind which views the world mainly under the modern category of development, which, however, has its ancient analogies. Humanity is thought of as in gradual progress of upward development from the brute. Sin broadly appears as the remains of the tiger and the ape-nature in us, which is gradually being outgrown; or, where it is admitted to be more than that, as the mistake or fault of the individual choosing the lower instead of the higher, which is the fault of his own will only, and does not involve the race as a whole. In this process of upward movement, viewed spiritually, Christ is the highest point. The language of incarnation may be accepted. He may be declared Son of God, or the phrase 'God in man' may be used; but the idea is that humanity is God's son, that God is, so to speak, incarnate or becoming incarnate in humanity, and that Christ is in the highest degree what every man is in a measure because he has the Word and Spirit of God in him. Now, Christ's sinlessness, in an absolute sense, is an encumbrance to this view. The virgin birth is an offence. Miracles, as a whole, including the physical resurrection, are an

encumbrance. What is wanted is a more or less comprehensive view of a development in which the divine sonship of man is the climax, and Jesus Christ is the highest specimen. This view is represented consistently in many German and English Unitarian Theists. In ancient language, we should describe it as a Pelagian view of man associated with a Nestorian view of Christ, and leading to a Sabellian doctrine of God. The cohesion of these ideas was recognized in early times, and it is recognizable enough in our day in modern forms.

Now, this sequence of ideas may be very strongly criticized in itself. The idea of sin as something which in the process of civilization we show a tendency to outgrow, is quite contrary to experience. The evidence of the Gospels, too deeply engraved into the record to admit of dislodgement, postulates in Christ both a sinlessness and a personal claim which force us to recognize in Him something much more than this highest development of our existing manhood. The historical witness to the miracles, and pre-eminently to the physical resurrection, is overwhelming. But I am concerned now not to combat this set of

ideas, but to confront them with another which, starting from the same fundamental conception of God and man,[1] is distinguished first of all by the severer view of sin. This is the Bible view. Sin is so deep a taint, so profound an evil, and so ingrained into the whole stock of our humanity, that we cry out—and the best specimens of our common manhood most strenuously—for something more than progress—for redemption—for a new birth: that is, a new creative act which shall give our nature a fresh start. This profound sense of sin and need gives a welcome to the Catholic and New Testament doctrine of a divine act of redemption, led up to, indeed, in the course of history, and prepared for by the anticipations of prophecy, but in itself single and unique; an absolute act of God, by which the Son of God, the eternal Son of the Father, for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate and was made man. This is a phrase which could not possibly be

[1] This was written before the conception of the divine immanence (in the exclusive sense) and the substantial identity of Godhead and manhood, had become prominent.

applied to any other event than one—the one incarnation, or to any other person than one—Jesus Christ, believed to be personally God in manhood. This new creative act of God brings into the world a new manhood—perfectly human, but free from all the taint and weakness of sin; and the startling distinction between Jesus Christ's conscious sinlessness and the consciousness of other prophets and saints suggests so manifest a moral miracle, as makes the idea of the physical miracle which accompanied His birth intellectually welcome and congruous; while it leads on naturally to a human life such as the Gospels describe.

But the divine Incarnation is the consummation of our human nature in union with God, as well as its redemption. In Christ our manhood is taken into God. He is God in manhood. This both puts Christ in a quite unique relation to all other men, so that He can become in a complete sense the head and fount of a new manhood by spiritual regeneration; and also gives a reason of the most weighty kind for His miracles and the resurrection. His miracles are not portents; they are the

physical counterparts of His moral teaching and claim. They are the evidences such as we feel in our deepest moments we rationally need, that there is only one lordship in the universe, and that the material world, which commonly seems so indifferent to moral distinctions, ultimately and at the bottom is only the instrument of the moral will of God. This is made manifest by the miracles and the resurrection of Christ as it could be in no other way. Christ presents to us in summary an anticipation of the final victory of spirit in matter; and assures us of the glorious future, which, through all failure and disaster, awaits the manhood which holds fast by God. Meanwhile the whole relation of the Son to the Father revealed in the incarnation, and of the Spirit to both, establishes the idea of the Trinity which offers its profound solution of the ultimate difficulties of divine personality by disclosing to us a social nature in the depth of the one divine being.

All this is obvious. It means only that the whole set of ideas about sin and redemption and the Incarnation and the Trinity, which belong to the catholic creeds,

and are the commonplaces of historical Christianity, cohere and are practically indissoluble. It suggests, what I am sure is true, that to abandon our maintenance of miracles as an integral part of our creed; or in particular of one miracle, the Lord's birth of a virgin—as if the rest of the fabric would be unimpaired—is simply due to lack of perception. In fact, the writers who ask for the particular surrender make it manifest enough, if their thought is scrutinized, that what they are asking for is something much more than a single surrender; it is the substitution of one whole set of ideas for another. And if we examine wherein lies the secret of the difference between the Catholic and the Unitarian set of ideas, we shall find it, I am persuaded, not so much in any view of historical evidence, as in the different views of what sin is and what it needs. The deeper, severer, view of sin is the clue to the whole Catholic sequence of ideas. And what a man thinks about sin is very largely a matter of his own personal moral consciousness.

I repeat: in current controversies as to what Christian belief does or does not

necessarily involve, the language used by different sides is, on the surface, largely identical ; but what we are really concerned with is a conflict between two fundamentally different cycles of ideas.

I have tried to face the question : In an age of change and criticism and new knowledge, what are we to regard as permanent Christianity ? what are we to regard as the permanent faith for which we are to contend to death—any ' advance ' out of which, to use St. John's phrase, is only advance along a road which separates from God and Christ ? I reply, first of all, the faith summarized and expressed in the catholic creeds—that faith in God and man, and man's destiny ; in the incarnation and the person of Christ and the accompanying miracles, and the eternal triune being of God disclosed in Christ's revelation. Beyond that, I am not now inquiring whether there be anything more of equal value. But that first of all, and every part of it. And my reason is, because in a remarkable manner it obeys all those three tests which I may restate in a different order. First, that this whole faith is

historically identified in all its parts with historical Christianity. It comes to us with the whole weight of Christian authority. Secondly, this is not bare authority. We discover in the articles thus proposed by authority a most convincing sequence of ideas. It is not a number of isolated dogmas, but one view, coherent and indissoluble. Thirdly, when we approach the historical evidence we find it (at the points material to our present inquiry) cogent in a high degree. It supports and justifies our belief that the facts on which our faith rests really occurred. And if the mind is already furnished with the ideas which render it susceptible of the evidence, or, to put it in other words, if it is free from the hostile prejudices which belong to another set of ideas, it will not fail to find the evidence convincing.

I have ventured to suggest the consideration and application of this threefold test, because I feel that our scholars are mostly applying the test of criticism, as if really historical criticism were, what it is not, an abstract instrument which could be detached from the general furniture of the

mind. It is possible that the intellect of the schools in our own age may become so merely critical as to make it highly difficult for the professed student to be a believer. The remedy for this lies, surely, in the deliberate restoration of other modes of approach to Christian truth. If the educated intellect becomes purely critical, we may feel sure that whatever restoration or revival of religion is to be expected in the future, will have to arise out of another kind of soil—out of something more broadly human, more spiritually profound; in a word, more sympathetic with Christ's own mind.

SERMON III

THE CHRISTIAN IDEA OF SIN[1]

Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.—*St. Matt.* iii. 2.

IT is my persuasion, which deepens with every year of experience, that there will be no revival of vital religion among us, on any large scale, or with any adequate results, except through a deepening of the sense of sin: a return to the properly Christian severity of view about the meaning of sin and its consequences; and that this is needed equally in all classes of society and among all kinds of men. There is, in the Old Testament, a narrative of the way in which the foolish king, Jehoiakim, and his courtiers, received the solemn warnings of Jeremiah, as Jehudi read them from the roll of the book in which Jeremiah had caused Baruch to write them.[2] 'And

[1] A sermon preached before the University of Oxford on December 13, 1903, and previously published.

[2] Jer. xxxvi. 21 ff.

Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king. Now the king sat in the winter-house . . . and there was a fire in the brazier burning before him. And it came to pass, when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, that the king cut it with the pen-knife and cast it into the fire that was in the brazier, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was in the brazier. And they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king nor any of his servants that heard all these words.' 'They were not afraid' of the warnings of the word of God on sin. That seems to describe the attitude of all classes (I do not say, by any means, of all individuals) of our society to-day. The horror of sin and the terror of its consequences have come to be regarded as somewhat old-fashioned. But this false fearlessness of the king Jehoiakim was the ruin of himself and his country. If there is any truth in the Bible, it is this: that sin is not a stage in upward evolution, a mere survival of animal tendencies which is gradually being outgrown; nor a mere result of untoward circumstances, or lack of education or

experience ; but a lawlessness of the human will, a perpetually renewed rebellion against God or neglect of God, which disorders human nature by depriving it of the fellowship of God, and ruins both the individual and the social life, except so far as repentance leads towards amendment, and opens the way for that divine redemption which God's love is ever offering.

It is quite a mistake to suppose that this teaching about sin is dependent upon our regarding the story of the Fall, in Genesis iii., as historical. If the materials of that story are derived from popular legends, common to the Israelites and the Babylonians, they have been used by a truly inspired mind, and been turned into an everlastingly true parable of what temptation and sin really are. Moreover, that story has strangely little appreciable effect on the rest of the Old Testament. The Old Testament view of sin is simply the result of the moral teaching about the character of God and the nature of man which constitutes the central feature of the Old Testament revelation. In the Old Testament, indeed, the view of sin and its consequences is mainly confined to this

life. Sin is ruin, here and now, to the individual and the State. It is social ruin. That is permanently true. Professor Huxley speaks of 'that fixed order of nature which sends social disorganization upon the track of immorality, as surely as it sends physical disease after physical trespasses,' and he speaks of its being 'the high mission' of science 'to be the priestess of a firm and lively faith' in that fixed moral order.[1] Substitute for the words 'fixed order' some such phrase as 'the will of God in the government of the world,' and you have the teaching of the prophets about the 'day of the Lord'—the judgement of God upon nations. That is permanently true teaching. It admits of no advance. It is given practically in its final form in the Old Testament prophets. It simply passes over from the Old Testament into the New, and receives its reaffirmation through the lips of Christ. And it is verified, if we look below the surface, in the history of the falls of nations and governing classes.

But as to the consequences of sin to the

[1] T. H. Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics* (Macmillan, 1903), p. 146.

individual, the Old Testament teaching was much more imperfect. 'The soul that sinneth it shall die,' meant at first that God's judgements on individuals accomplish themselves in this world. Sin is punished by misfortune and death. Moral experience broke down this simple faith and forced the conscience of man forward to see, in a wider area, and a course extending out beyond the limits of this life, the fulfilment of the dealings of God with the human soul. But the Christ, when He came, with His full disclosure of divine love and human destiny, did not mitigate, nay, rather He intensified, the severity of Old Testament teaching about the consequences of sin to the individual soul. He would have men still tremble—till perfect love should cast out fear—under the terror of the wrath of God. 'Yea, I say unto you, fear him.' So long as the fear of temporal disaster in this world is an inevitable element in human nature, an inevitable stimulus to avoid the disaster that threatens, I cannot conceive why men should endeavour to eliminate from our ordinary human motives the fear of eternal ruin. We may, indeed, regard hell as

nothing else but the inevitable outcome, in another world than this, of the process by which, in this world, we have formed for ourselves a character incompatible with God. We may rid the doctrine of any inequitable associations. We may recognize to the full the compassion of God, the love which binds Him to do the utmost possible for every human soul which He has created, and to be equitable with a father's equity, in taking into account ignorance, or hard circumstances, or lack of opportunity. But there is such a thing as self-willed independence of God; as lust which will not be controlled; as avarice or ambition which will not brook restraints; as malice which will not forgive. There is the possibility that men may—nay, there is the experience that men do—harden themselves in persistent habit, passing into indelible character, into a moral state incompatible with the fellowship of God. Death does not change us. It only strips us bare, and transplants into a world where only God is, and His judgements: and the man there reaps the consequences of what, in defiance or neglect of God, he has become. If men are to be dealt with

in accordance with moral laws, God Himself cannot alter those consequences. And, unless we are prepared to play fast and loose with language, we must admit that those consequences, according to the teaching of the New Testament, may have become final and irreversible—an eternal sin—an eternal perishing, a state of being finally outcast and of knowing it, which is the weeping and gnashing of teeth. It is because the New Testament takes this tremendous view of sin, and treats it as a universal fact in human nature, that its whole teaching about man treats him as being the subject of redemption—as needing in each individual case to be bought back out of a slavery in which he lies.

The divine method of this redemption is, so to speak, from within the human race itself. It is a new creative act of God restoring in human nature a moral creation which had been ruined. The Saviour is man, but new man ; born, but virgin-born. He moves out into experience and history as 'in all points' tried as we other men, his brethren, are, but with one significant exception—He knew no sin. He was without sin in Himself. He set the pattern of

our manhood, not as we have made it, but as God would have it be, and will (if we will let Him) remake it. The sin which was in the world marked the Saviour's steps with blood and nailed Him to the cross. But His willing obedience, unto death—the willingness of a manhood wholly in conformity with God—turns the death which a God-refusing world recklessly inflicted, into a perfect offering of a perfect manhood consecrated by self-sacrifice—an offering which brings back our wilful nature into the fellowship with God which it had lost. It was as our representative that He lived our life, conscious of Himself as the Son of Man. It was as our representative that He offered for us and in our stead the sacrifice that we had been withholding. And living, risen and glorified through death and beyond it, it is still as our representative, the second Adam, the head of a redeemed race, that He builds up a new humanity, a temple on a secure basis, a city that hath foundations, in which the real divine purpose for man is to be realized, even into an everlasting fulfilment. But still for every individual, the sin which taints every man and woman, aye, and

every child, makes it a moral necessity that there should be a new birth, a fresh incorporation upon a fresh stock, the stock of the new man, Jesus the Christ : and this incorporation upon the new stock, if it is to be efficacious, must be a real personal act of faith and repentance, a real ' turning ' of the will. ' Except ye be converted (or ' turn '), ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God. And because sin is ingrained into our nature, therefore the recovery of the dominion of the spirit needs all through life a continual ' mortification,' a putting to death of the old man that the new may grow—a dying to live.

But do you say to the preacher, this is all very commonplace and very old-fashioned ? We have heard it very often. But you do not seem to have been reading modern literature. We have got a somewhat different version of these things. The law of humanity is progress. The sphere of progress is this world. We look before and after, and find in the scientific doctrine of development the guarantee of this progress. This is the gospel of modern science. What you call sin is a survival of the animal propensities of a pre-human

ancestry—it is the tiger or the ape in us—which we are slowly out-growing in the upward movement of the human race. Nay, the preacher may make rejoinder: This comfortable doctrine is not science, nor based on science, properly so-called. Professor Huxley, who was a scientific man, when he came to Oxford to speak his Romanes lecture many years ago, told us, and it is as true to-day, that science has got no gospel of progress at all. 'The survival of the fittest' means not the survival of the best, but the survival of those best suited to their surroundings. The 'survival of the fittest' may mean, and may come to mean, for all that science can say to the contrary, 'the survival of the worst.' 'The theory of evolution,'[1] he went on, 'encourages no millennial anticipations. If, for millions of years, our globe has taken the upward road, yet, some time, the summit will be reached and the downward road will be commenced.' And science knows not when: neither in the individual case, nor that of the nation, nor that of the race. Science simply observes changes which are sometimes from

[1] *loc. cit.*, pp. 80, 85.

worse to better and sometimes from better to worse, and she traces, when she can, the conditions and the law of these changes : but she indulges in no prophecies and would have no reason at all, so far as she is science, to be disappointed when an epoch of change passes into an epoch of deterioration.

Nay : science most certainly gives us no message of necessary human progress. How could she, in view of the facts of past history ? Take a tour in imagination round the Mediterranean Sea, beginning with Morocco and ending with Spain. Examine country after country, race after race, city after city. One after another, almost without exception, through the whole tour, they yield the answer : Our contribution to the sum of human knowledge, human virtue, human progress, was made centuries ago, millenniums ago. Our glories live in the past. We are interesting mainly because of very remote memories or very ancient history. And there is little hope of recovery here, except, perhaps, through the intrusion of some strange race to dispossess a fallen one. Nay, extend your view. Take a map and go over the surface

of the globe, and ascertain accurately of how many races you can say that there is evidence of progress, if you compare what they are now, with what they were a thousand years ago. You will be astonished at the vast area of stagnation, the vast area of retrogression and decay, as compared to the line of progress. Nay, take but the progressive races, and you will find even more ambiguous the relation of civilization to moral progress. Nations do not always become better as they grow more civilized. Sometimes you trace moral progress, as history records it, and find it passing into an age of general moral deterioration. We seem to be morally better than we were a hundred years ago in England. But what reasonable man but owns that the moral condition of our country is very precarious? Who then can reasonably say—with his eyes on the indisputable and widely-spread facts of moral deterioration in races—that sin is a survival which men are seen to be outgrowing? Science indeed! Such an idea is mere wilfulness.

And if you begin to examine individuals, how utterly contrary to experience is any

idea of regular advance! How many men disappoint hopes! how many deteriorate —grow worse, not better! How many men and women are wrecks—the mere ruins of what they might have been!

Have we no doctrine of human progress, then? Indeed we have: it is grounded on the ineradicable consciousness of hope which God, who made man, has inspired; it has been nourished by His prophets; it is confirmed and realized by our Lord, Son of God and Son of Man. Yes, men, according to Christian teaching, are meant for progress. There is an assured goal. There is to be a perfected humanity, a city of God in which no good thing shall be lost, into which all the gains of all mankind shall be at last stored up and accumulated. 'They shall bring the glory and honour of all nations into the city of God.' But this perfection cannot be won by taking ourselves as we are and languidly hoping for the best, by treating sin as if we should naturally outgrow it; but by awakening from sin; by knowing it to be disease which needs sharp remedies, for it is mortal; by conversion; by confession; by bearing our penance; by a new birth

into a new manhood; by a dying to the old manhood to live in the new.

There is, of course, a theory or way of conceiving of the world which is called scientific, which is in the most direct conflict with the Christian teaching about sin—I mean, the theory which refuses to see anything in the world but the inevitable sequence of physical phenomena, according to physical law, which would have good characters and bad characters to be merely physical products, like good apples and bad apples, and which refuses, accordingly, to recognize the possibility of any actions which ought not to have been done, and, in fact, need not have been done. But such a fatalism really ignores a whole class of facts involved in our moral consciousness. Confessedly it will not work; that is, it has to be repudiated in order to deal with real life. You cannot dare to educate a child in the belief that nothing he may do could have been otherwise. All possibility of moral progress is bound up with the belief in moral freedom. You can give no account on such a theory of the ineradicable consciousness of guilt and shame which belongs to a fairly good man when he has

done really wrong—'the self-contempt, bitterer to drink than blood.' On the other hand, the postulate of voluntary action, the power, that is, to direct a certain amount of force in the channel of one kind of action or of another, does not result in any conclusion incompatible with any observed or observable facts of the physical world. You may defy any one to show you any observed or observable fact which must have been otherwise if the postulate of moral freedom were true. I think we are not wrong in saying that the denial of the fundamental axiom of moral responsibility is due, not to any contrary facts, but to an abstract refusal to recognize any other class of facts than those which fall under the purview of physical investigation. May we not hope that in this region, at least, a better relationship is already afoot between religion and moral thought on the one side, and physical science on the other? We have lost a really great man in Mr. Herbert Spencer—really great, because he determined to view the sum of ascertainable reality as a whole, and to deal with it as a whole, and pursued this great ambition with such indomitable industry. But may

we not say that so far as his was an attempt to bring all facts, including moral and spiritual facts, under a single formula of physical evolution, it belongs to a bygone age, to the hot and arrogant youth of science; and that science, since Herbert Spencer began to write, has become wonderfully more modest and conscious of its limitations; even as its old rival, theology, has quite changed its attitude and become wonderfully deferential and respectful toward physical science—even, perhaps, at times too submissive to its more hasty or conjectural utterances?

We must be true both to physical reality and to that which is moral and spiritual, and interpret each apart, and on its own ground, and by its own methods, if we are to attain more nearly to completeness of knowledge and fullness of outlook.

But if you set aside a fatalist view of the universe—if the fact of moral choice and moral responsibility is admitted—then I cannot understand how there is any stopping on the way to the acceptance of the Christian view of sin.

Let it be granted that the doctrine of physical evolution has occupied the ground

of human thought, and permanently displaced the idea of special creations—let it be granted, that is, that our race developed out of an animal ancestry; let it be granted that the early chapters of Genesis give us in forms of the imagination certain elemental spiritual truths about God, and nature, and man, and human sin—that they most assuredly do—but no actual history of the origins of things; still the fact remains—the development of the human race has not been what it might have been, what it ought to have been, what in the purpose of God it was intended to be. I know this for a fact, because I know it in my own history. I am not what I was meant to be. And the reason of my miserable failure to become what God meant me to be, is nothing whatever but my sin, my faithlessness, my wilfulness, my impatience, my lawless lust—my fault, my own fault, my own great fault. I *know* this is true of myself, if I like to think. I know it is true in countless others. I see their wilfulness, waywardness, selfishness spoiling homes, ruining friendship, alienating love, corrupting life, on all sides. I work this out on

the great scale, and see sin—human lawlessness—retarding the divine purpose for man's development all through, turning into evil what was meant for good. I see this sin in the individual writ large in the race, and I know its true character in my own heart. I go back in imagination to the beginning, and I know that, however and wherever and whenever the human consciousness, the consciousness of self, the consciousness of choice, the consciousness of fellowship with the divine, dawned in the animal organism, there, back in the dim beginnings, under conditions which I can but dimly realize, it must have been the same thing in principle. What retarded, impeded, destroyed at the beginning, in the rude beginnings of our race, is what retards, impedes, destroys now—*sin*.

I am saying nothing about the tainting of the stock of manhood and the inheritance of sin, though I find it wholly impossible to doubt that sin has weakened the race by an inherited taint or disorder. And I do not anticipate that careful biological or psychological science is likely ultimately to find itself in ascertained conflict with this idea. I recall a remark of George

Romanes that Weismann himself would, he doubted not, be the first to allow that his theory of heredity encounters greater difficulties in the domain of ethics than in any other—unless, indeed, it were in that of religion.[1] But I make no assumption here of the quasi-physical transmission of sin. I look now only to the universality of actual sins in experience, and to the light in which they reveal themselves in the inner consciousness; and I say, the Bible is right. Sin is the great enemy. There is no illusion so extraordinary as the light-heartedness of men in view of the mastery which sin manifestly has over them and in them. And as the Christian message is a message to men who feel the burden and the guilt of sin, so true is it that what we need to-day is some John the Baptist to prepare the way of the Lord by arousing us again in all classes, and under all sorts of conditions in life, to a wholesome and a godly fear of sin and of its consequences.

The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

[1] See *Darwin and After Darwin* (Longmans, 1895), ii. p. 90.

There is no optimism so strong as the optimism of the forecast for humanity which our religion offers us, if only we will set ourselves deliberately to face, and recognize, and deal with the one great obstacle, in the only way in which it can be dealt with—the obstacle of sin. We must deal with it first in ourselves, and if in ourselves we have realized something of the joy and thankfulness which belong to those who know themselves to be redeemed men—men in whom the divine redemption is actually taking place—then and then only we can go out into the world to do the work of evangelists, and make men feel that the kingdom of heaven is among us and within.

SERMON IV

SACRIFICE, THE GENIUS OF CHRISTIANITY [1]

Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.—*St. Luke* xiv. 33.

THE genius of the Christian religion is sacrifice. When our Lord began to publish the kingdom, He first of all accompanied His proclamation by revealing the character of God in acts of compassion, the compassion which had power in it to heal and to lift; and all this disclosure of the powerful pity of God was made very freely, and so as to involve very little claim on the lives of the men who were the objects of it. But when He proceeded to build His spiritual kingdom, it was different. Then we see Him standing, as it were, over against the wills and hearts of men, inviting, attracting to sacrifice, claiming sacrifice, welcoming the sacrifice when it

[1] The Commemoration Sermon, preached before the University of Oxford, on June 17, 1906.

is offered. He prepares the apostles by a preliminary discipline, and then claims of them the sacrifice of their profession and its prospects by His 'Follow me.' So it is with the fishermen; so it is with the tax collector. And these are no mere episodes. They exhibit the principle which our Lord loves to state in the most paradoxical form. If a man 'forsake not all that he hath'; if he 'hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.' The kingdom of heaven is a pearl of great price, and a man must sell all that he hath to buy it.

Our Lord educates His disciples to recognize the justification of the sacrifice which He demands. His dealings with them are all directed to fostering in their minds the sense that He Himself is absolutely to be trusted in all emergencies, for all the needs of body and spirit, in all the critical moments of life and death—that He is all they need. When He had fostered this sense, He draws from Peter, as He had before drawn from him the confession of His name, so now the pro-

fession of His service: 'Behold, we have left all and followed thee.' And He meets this profession with a like benediction: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, and every one that hath left houses, or brethren, or sisters or father, or mother, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit eternal life.'

And this welcoming of sacrifice is not limited to any particular class. It is the characteristic mark of all our Lord's dealings with human souls. The rich man Zacchaeus is blessed, because, when our Lord had arrested his attention, and converted his will, he stood out publicly, and made public sacrifice, going far beyond what could be said to be required of him. 'Behold, Lord, the half of all that I possess I give to the poor, and I restore fourfold any wrongful exaction which as a tax-collector I have made.' And the solemn benediction falls on him: 'This day is salvation come to this house.' Just in the same spirit our Lord blesses the woman who publicly showed her lavish love by costly sacrifice, who poured the cruse of exceeding precious ointment upon

His head. Just in the same spirit our Lord meets the rich young man who wanted to know the way of perfection, and claims of him the total sacrifice of his worldly possessions, and when he would not make it, lets him go away sorrowful. Just in the same spirit He welcomes the widow's mite, not because it cost her nothing, but because it was 'all her living.' This, I say, is the principle of our Lord's dealing.

We rightly claim the Sermon on the Mount as the moral law of the Christian kingdom. But it is very unlike ordinary legislation. It does not consist of prohibitions; nor does it enjoin for the more part such external actions as can be required in a settled community of all its citizens. But it deals with the motives of the heart and of the will; and when it embodies its claims in characteristic actions, they are actions which have, as it were, the character of individual paradox—the paradox of self-sacrifice.

Against all this must be set the fact that our Lord was preparing an organized society, and solemnly and repeatedly imparted to the organized society the proper

legislative authority over the members of the society which is essential for corporate life—that is, the power to bind and loose. The facts of the earliest Christian church cannot be fairly interpreted except on the supposition that Christ was the conscious founder of a visible society, and prepared the way for its corporate and continuous life. In only one particular of moral conduct did He Himself legislate, in the spirit of the ordinary legislator, and that was with regard to the sanctity of marriage. But our Lord recognizes and provides the conditions necessary for the continuous life of any society—the permanence of the social law in its ordinary sense. This, however, is not the most characteristic part of His method. Within the area of what can be required of the ordinary good man, He stands over against the souls of men already pious and God-fearing, over against those who would turn from sin to God, inviting to sacrifice, claiming sacrifice, encouraging and welcoming sacrifice, meeting it with His supreme benediction, as if it were in that alone that the true relation of the soul to God is exhibited and realized.

And it is exactly the same principle that we find in the Acts and in the apostolic epistles. The church promptly shows herself a legislative body, binding and loosing, that is, forbidding and allowing, prescribing the necessary minimum for common and corporate life. 'It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that ye abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication. From which if you keep yourselves it shall be well with you.' There is the binding and loosing church, prescribing the minimum necessary for corporate life; but within the area thus marked out, the life of the church exhibits itself freely and delightfully in voluntary sacrifice, so that the very distinctions of thine and mine are for the time obliterated.

Again St. Paul shows, as much as any man, the consciousness of what is required of the church, if it is to be held together as a continuous corporate society. There must be the ordinary action of legislation. St. Paul perceives that legislation consists mainly in negatives, and that its object

is to keep down wickedness. 'Law is not made for the righteous, but for the ungodly.' And for all the strong contrast that St. Paul draws between the characteristic of the Old Covenant, which is law, and the characteristic of the New Covenant, which is grace, still from the first he appears as the organizer and the legislator of the churches—and that without any scruple or hesitation. He legislates with regard to women's veils, and for the regulation of prophecy and tongues, in his earlier epistles to the Corinthians, quite as readily as he legislates for the requirements of the churches of Ephesus or Crete, through his apostolic legates Timothy and Titus, at the end of his life. But within the area secured thus by legislation from the overflowings of wickedness, the positive and characteristic spirit of Christianity has its vantage-ground, and that is the spirit of sacrifice.

St. Paul, in his conception of the sacrifice of Christ which redeemed us, treats it indeed as a vicarious act, in that it is God's pure gift to us, to which we contributed nothing, and which was done of Christ's own love and the Father's love for our

sakes, and in our stead. But, also, St. Paul's whole conception of this vicarious sacrifice is that it stands over against us, as a challenge or appeal to us to do the like, and that as a matter of course. It is something which rests on the incontrovertible logic of the heart. 'Because we thus judge, that if one died for all, therefore all died'; that is, in His person, all who believed in Him were, once for all, alienated, as by death, from the world which had put Him to death; 'and he died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and lived again.' The sacrifice of Christ is, to St. Paul, simply an appeal to us to go and do likewise; and in his own practice he delights to recognize that he is doing something over and above what anybody can say is required of him. It is required by his very vocation that he should preach the Gospel; and that, with all its attendant risks and dangers, is what all men can claim of him, as God claims it of him. But he delights to offer a free-will offering over and above this; and the free-will offering is that he should receive no pay, though he can

claim it if he would, for 'the labourer is worthy of his hire,' by Christ's own declaration.

We need not attribute to St. Paul a doctrine of merit, against which his whole theology is in revolt. Merit, we may say, lives, for St. Paul, 'from man to man, and not from man, O God, to Thee.' But the evident truth is that St. Paul thought it a characteristic exhibition of the Christian spirit that a man should offer a free sacrifice, something over and above what could be required or expected by one man of another, over and above what could be required by the church of all its members or officers.

We shall find this same principle characteristic of the other writers of the New Testament. The characteristic of love in St. John's Epistles is sacrifice: 'Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren;' that is, sacrifice can only be met and responded to by like sacrifice, the sacrifice of God by our self-sacrifice. And in the Apocalypse the characteristic Christian assemblages, the gatherings before the Throne, appear to be

gatherings of men who have made the great sacrifices. They are martyrs and virgins.

Thus the conception we are led to form of the church in the New Testament suggests a picture to which the facts of the church correspond very generally in all its best periods in history. It is the picture of a society visibly organized in the world with an ordinary legislation, keeping it distinct from other societies and guarding its necessary boundaries. But within the area thus marked off, the characteristic life of the society is found not merely in conformity to a normal rule, but in the exercise of personal and voluntary sacrifice. The characteristic spirit of the church is seen in the martyrs, who are allowed to combine in one act the necessary requirement upon every one—that he should not deny his Lord—with the highest ecstasy of voluntary joy. I say the characteristic spirit of the church is seen in her martyrs, her virgins, her hermits, her missionaries, her evangelists. These are characteristic, because they exhibit the spirit in a striking form. There is no need to say that they are better than the fathers and mothers, and Christian

men of business, and theologians, and ordinary clergy, whose sacrifices are inconspicuous, 'who live faithfully hidden lives.' But what it is necessary to say is that where the true spirit of Christianity is kept alive in the community, there it will always be recognized that self-sacrifice is the normal and characteristic thing; and it will be continually exhibiting itself outwardly and visibly in special characteristic acts, such as the abandonment of wealth, or the abandonment of family life, or the abandonment of home; and if the spirit is not finding expression in these and the like 'evangelical counsels,' it must be reckoned in all probability that the church is being unfaithful to her true self.

Our minds naturally go back to the English Christianity of the eighteenth century, with its detestation of enthusiasm,[1] when a man like Bishop Butler could say

[1] I do not deny that what Butler and his contemporaries meant by 'enthusiasm' was something different to what we mean by it, and that we ought to condemn what they condemned as enthusiasm; but I think that this condemnation of enthusiasm in a bad sense, involved a wonderful ignoring of the place in the Christian character of enthusiasm in the right sense.

of a man like George Whitefield: 'Sir, the pretending to extraordinary revelation and gifts of the Holy Ghost is a horrid thing, a very horrid thing.' The idea then seems to have been that enthusiasm was something contradictory to settled organization and order, or to rational religion; but this is the greatest possible mistake. It is the function of the intellect to appreciate the facts and motives and conceptions of the Christian life, and to bring them into relation with the whole of human knowledge, and to bring out clearly, for the enlightenment of the Christian spirit, what our religion really means, and what intellectual propositions it must necessarily maintain and contend for, if it is to subsist in the world of thought and controversy. As a matter of fact, the enthusiasm of the first Christian church could not have won the world, if the theologians of the Christian church had not been maintaining their intellectual position in the face of the world's thought. As a matter of fact, the great periods of Christian enthusiasm have always been in some close relation to the great periods of intellectual revival. In the

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it is not easy to exaggerate how much the revivals of religion, evangelical and catholic, owed to the fact that the great apologists, the Berkeleys, the Butlers, the Paleys, had secured the intellectual standing-ground. But to secure the intellectual platform is one thing—to mark out the area of Christian thought in its broad outline is one thing—and to live the life within the area is another. The apologist of the eighteenth century has been compared to a landlord who accumulates the title-deeds of an estate which he neglects to cultivate.

Once again, there is, or ought to be, no kind of conflict between organization and enthusiasm. That is to say, there is no necessary conflict. And in fact the clearer and more definite the recognition of the authority of government in the church, the easier the welcoming of enthusiasm. It has been the clear recognition of authority—the clear action of organization—in the Roman Church which (as has been very often recognized) has been the chief advantage which the Roman Church has had in welcoming and giving free play to the enthusiasm of sacrifice. It has

been because the idea of ecclesiastical authority in the church of England has been confused and mixed up with the totally distinct idea of civil authority, that the life of the church has been hampered. The lines of what the church allows and does not allow have been confused and broken down ; and as a consequence we have had such a frequent exhibition of the conflict between enthusiasm and authority ; not because the enthusiasm is necessarily lawless, or the authority narrow, but because authority has not been free to lay down the lines within which the fresh life of the church can be allowed its heroic ventures, and can feel the strong foundation under its feet for enthusiastic devotion.

This, then, is the point : The church is a visible, continuous and organized body. It must have its laws, therefore, positive and negative. They are contemplated by Christ, who gave the church divine authority to govern. 'Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven ; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.' He made it part of the obligation of discipleship to

hear the church. The church has thus fulfilled her function rightly in laying down necessary limits, doctrinal and practical. In doing this there must be a minimum prescribed. A man who does not do such and such things; who needlessly works on the Lord's day; or fails to attend the Lord's service; or does not observe such and such requirements; or repudiates such and such a truth, must be excommunicated. That is to say that his conduct or belief is inconsistent with the fundamental requirements of membership. It is the same with the positive moral law. It must subsist for the lawless, the unholy and profane; to warn them off, to say 'Thou shalt not'; to say, once and again: 'They that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God'; to say, here and now, that they cannot be allowed the privilege of Christian fellowship. But it is within the area secured thus from the ravages of lawlessness; within the area where there are thus established certain accepted principles of thinking and feeling and living and worshipping,—it is within this area that the real Christian motive can be brought freely into play. The

drawing of the limits is, in every sense of the word, the beginning and not the end. It is the necessary condition of the life itself. But the life itself means the upholding and keeping in conspicuous prominence of the Lord's sacrifice, as that which must appeal to men to meet like with like, to give all for all.

I have tried to describe the place of sacrifice in the Christian life; the place which it holds by relation to intellectual effort and to organization; the place it holds by relation to the function of positive law. I have tried to draw this picture of where law ends and sacrifice begins—or rather where law passes into love, for it is all of the same moral substance—and the spirit of conformity passes into the spirit of sacrifice. I have tried to do this, because when we endeavour to attain to quietness, and to take a comprehensive view of the times we live in, we appear to be running a great risk of missing the opportunity offered to our church, for no other reason than because we fail to recognize these necessary conditions of the life of the Christian society. I mean that we neither draw limits—we neither exercise

the proper function of law; nor do we give its true place, or anything like its true place, to the free spirit of sacrifice. We resent law in religion. We dislike laying down necessary conditions of orthodoxy. We dislike saying that any positive dogma is really a necessary limit for the exercise of Christian communion, or even of the Christian ministry. We resent the requirement of anything specific—for instance, the requirement of confirmation. We are always finding individual excuses such as seem to require us to dispense with the Christian law of marriage in its strictness. We seem to have lost the art of saying positively 'No.' It seems to me, however, self-evident that, though the specific requirements of the church—its positive and necessary laws—should be as simple and as few as possible, yet *some* positive limits, such as must be insisted upon, and such as involve saying: 'If you will not conform to this, you cannot share our fellowship, and must be, from our point of view, outside and not inside our body' —are necessary to the life of any society which would call itself Christian. We should lay on people no more than the most

necessary things ; but this necessary minimum we must lay on them, as a condition of communion or as a condition of ministry. It is not too much to say that what an individual or what a society really means, depends in the long run, at certain points, on what he or it is definitely prepared to exclude.

The Church of England has a vocation to be broad. Let us praise God for it. But breadth is quite consistent with knowing what our principles are and respecting them. We suffer then from this point of view from lack of definiteness. If we are to play our part, we must be content as a church to define our limits, to know where we are bound to agree, as well as where we are content to differ. What we want is that it should be evident before the eyes of our members, and before the eyes of the world generally, that we stand for a certain body of agreement, as well as for a large toleration of indifference. That is a quite intelligible standing-ground —to my mind the best and more Christian. Granted that, we want not to make too much of our dogmatic limits, but to treat all these as simply affording the necessary

starting-point for what is the real life of the church. I speak now only of the church's spiritual life. But here, again, we appear to be defective, almost as much as we appear to be defective in the maintenance of positive law. The perilous tendency among us is to appeal always to averages or majorities ; to ask ourselves what sort of religion we can induce men in general, rich or poor, to accept and welcome ; to make religion easy ; to abstain from asking too much ; to accommodate the requirements of religion to what we suppose men in general will be ready to accept. Nothing could be so directly contrary to the method of Christ. He never will suffer the best to be sacrificed to what may be supposed to be the average requirement. He moves on His way relentlessly, presenting the high and complete claim, though it became more and more evident that His people as a whole would reject it. He never turns aside to remodel His religion, and to accommodate it to what would be found generally to commend itself to each class, to Sadducee or to Pharisee ; to accommodate it to what would be found compatible with the politics

of the one and the prejudices of the other; or to what the mass of the people might be prepared to accept without too much effort. Our Lord chose and sanctified exactly the opposite method. He appealed with the whole truth, for the whole of the man's heart. In various ways He is continually saying: 'If a man will not let My appeal, the appeal of God, be a thing altogether without competition in his heart, and give all for all, he cannot be My disciple.' True, His appeal was welcome only to the few. It was a little band that gathered round Him. The wisdom of God within Him perceived and saw that the way to produce real moral results is through the few who are the light of the world, and the salt, and the city set on a hill.

There is a great claim, a claim overwhelmingly great, made upon the church to-day. Our colonies are crying out for help; our missions are so miserably understaffed that they are indisputably failing to meet the obvious and unmistakable requirements laid upon them. At home there are men and women in multitudes needed for the work of teaching, the work of evangelization, the work of social re-

covery, in the great towns and villages of our country. Great sins are flaunting themselves in England, as in America, stalking, as it seems, in almost unrebuked insolence. Truly there is a work for us to do; and in this place to-day, we may well be girding ourselves to do it. We are the inheritors here of the great past. We are thanking God for founders and benefactors who have bestowed so much upon this incomparable place, who have made this name of Oxford a name of irresistible charm. We have entered into the labours of other men; the labours of schoolmen, with their gigantic intellectual efforts; the labours of philosophers and early discoverers, who prepared the materials and opened the ways of knowledge; the labours of monks and friars, who established schools and nourished the principle of education; the labours of preachers, and pastors, and reformers, and professors; the benefactions of those who have endowed us with wealth; and of those, who are much more important, who have entrusted to us the true riches—the things that make for the enlightenment of mind, and the strengthening of conscience, and the sanctifying of life. It is

a great heritage. And we may be quite sure that if there is any one of us who has joined the society of one of our delightful colleges, and is bent on the whole to make it a playground, a place of agreeable pastime and social initiation into a comfortable position in life, or to make it a place for winning honours and seeking a name among his fellows—upon him there rests the curse of barrenness and of remorse, to be realized, we may hope, before it is too late. The things that come easy to our hand to-day are things, like our civil and religious liberty, bought by the sweat and blood of those who have lived before us. And we may be sure that whatever is noble and generous in us responds to this appeal: that we, who have been allowed to inherit these riches, material and spiritual, should own that we must use them as a trust from God. We have been allowed to appropriate the great heritage—to become fat on what we did not earn—only that we may make the sacrifice of our own lives full and complete, in the name of Him who spent the glory of His own being in making the idea of sacrifice beautiful and acceptable to man's heart.

Over all our store of possessions, gathered through the quiet and laborious and struggling centuries; over all our great fortunes and vast gains; over all our knowledge of nature and man; over all our elaborated amusements; over all our aesthetic subtleties and our mechanical skill; over all that we call our own; within sight of the still crying needs of corrupted and down-trodden and feeble men and women and the child-life squandered and perverted,—still there falls the claim of One who pleads for abandonment, for sacrifice, if we would live and work in His name and with His blessing: 'Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not . . . he cannot be my disciple.'

SERMON V

THE CHURCH AND THE POOR [1]

And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were astonished exceedingly.—*St. Mark* x. 23–26 (R.V. marg.).

THESE and the like words of our Lord have stood over against the church in many ages and many lands, convicting it of a great unreality; but over against no church and in no age have they sounded a more solemn protest than against our own to-day. I shall need no apology if I ask for a leading place in the thoughts of those who have assembled in this Congress of Churchmen for what ought to be, I believe, our chief anxiety, our most anxious subject of self-questioning: Are we of the Church

[1] A sermon preached at the Church Congress, Oct. 2, 1906, in St. James's Church, Barrow-in-Furness.

of England to-day faithful, as a great body of disciples should be, to our Master's teaching about wealth ?

This teaching is not a matter of a few words here and there. It is embodied in His whole life and method. The purpose of God expressed itself in the circumstances of His earthly origin. As we may reverently say, with all the possible human careers open before Him, the Father chose for Him, and He chose, to be born of poor and humble parents ; not to become incarnate in some position of political power or commanding influence ; not to have natural control of the forces which make up secular greatness ; nor, again, to appear as a philosopher or to have command of the natural instruments for intellectual influence ; but to be born in circumstances least calculated to suggest power of any kind—in a despised district of a subject kingdom, just about to become still more confessedly subject, remote from the centres of political or intellectual influence, and in the circle of labouring men. There is, indeed, nothing about our Lord which suggests any love of squalor, or any glorification of what we may call the pauper

lot. He was born of the seed of David; that is, of a family with noble memories, and haunted with noble hopes; of a family in the deepest sense respectable, but of the class of artisans; of the class that ranked itself as the poor over against the rich. The *Magnificat* of Mary already gives expression to the purpose of God: 'He hath put down the powerful off their thrones, and exalted them of low degree; he hath filled the hungry with good things, and sent away the rich empty.'

Our Lord, then, chose to belong to the class of the honourable artisan; and, on the whole, He chose His apostles from the same class. Again, there was nothing squalid or disreputable about them or their circumstances. He succoured the miserable, while He chose His instruments from among the morally excellent and the respectable; but from the class accustomed to live hardly, and to depend for sustenance upon daily labour. To this class He gave the prerogative position in His church. It is people of this kind who can pray most naturally the prayer to God the Father, 'Give us to-day the bread for the coming day.' And going out into the world with

such associations and surroundings, He made His deliberate intention more emphatic by associating blessedness with the lot of poverty—'Blessed are ye poor.' If He said also, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit'—that is, those who are detached from wealth—yet He claimed in general that the detachment should be made actual and visible.

He seems to stand over against each single human soul which comes before Him to seek the position of the disciple, eliciting, claiming, welcoming, and blessing the renunciation of wealth. In various ways and forms this appears; in His calling of the Twelve away from their professions; in the care and awful earnestness with which He warned them off the first approaches to ecclesiastical wealth—this, I think, is the real meaning of the parable of the unrighteous steward, and of other plainer passages; in the welcome He gave to the public renunciation of Zaccheus, and to the costly offering of Mary of Bethany, and to the widow's sacrifice of her meagre 'living'; in the claim made on the rich young man who would move onward in the way of perfection—'Go and sell all that thou hast and give to the

poor'; and in the tremendous warning which followed his withdrawal—'How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God,' a warning, we must remember, from which the corrected texts have removed the modification, 'How hardly shall they that trust in riches.' It is the possession of riches which remains the almost insuperable obstacle.

The primitive church was, in its temper and characteristics, just what we should expect from all this teaching. In the everlasting opposition of rich and poor, beyond all possibility of question, it ranked among, and spoke for, the poor. It did not so much exalt the dignity of labour, as make the obligation of labour positive and absolute on all its members. 'If a man will not work, neither let him eat.' Each man is to labour 'with his own hands,' and so 'eat his own bread.' There is to be support for those who cannot work, but not for those who will not. The Christian is to be content with the bare necessaries of actual life—'having food and covering.' What he earns over and above this he should not accumulate for his own enjoyment, but give away 'to him that needeth.'

The Lord's warnings are reiterated upon those who seek to become rich men. They can hardly escape perdition.[1]

It is quite true that the New Testament does not absolutely condemn the mere possession of wealth. There is such a phrase as St. Paul's, 'I know how to abound.' A rich man, retaining possession of his wealth, might have lived unrebuked in the churches of St. Paul, provided that he was treating his superfluity as a stewardship for the common good. But it is not too much to say that, in spite of the moral impartiality of the New Testament, in spite of the equality of its moral claim, its regular assumption is that God is on the side of the poor against the rich. It does not, indeed, encourage the oppressed poor to resistance by direct methods. It emphasizes the blessedness of submission to injury, while it supplies the most powerful remedy for injustice that the world has ever known, in the form of a brotherhood of labour and prayer—an immense organization for mutual help. But if it does not stimulate to resistance, it associates wealth with tyranny and wrong, and un-

[1] 1 Tim. vi. 7.

veils the judgement of God upon the selfish rich : ' Go to, ye rich men, weep and howl.' ' Hath not God chosen them that are poor ? '

The late Master of Balliol[1] used often to say, in his detached way, that he was afraid there was much more in the New Testament against being rich and in favour of being poor than we liked to recognize. And all the teaching which I have tried to summarize, as I believe without any exaggeration, represents the permanent mind of Him who is our Master. It suggests universal principles, which belong to all states of society. He is ' the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' He is the head of the church—of our branch of the church. He is still speaking to the angel of the Church of England. We have won victories ; but they have proved barren. We stand far stronger on the merely intellectual or apologetic ground than we stood thirty years ago. We have vindicated the liberty of biblical criticism and have still the weight of free New Testament scholarship—here in England, at least—on the side of our creed. We have practically won the battle of the liberty of catholic ceremonial.

[1] Dr. Jowett.

What is much more important, we have had great revivals of spiritual life; and, if only there were more driving-power behind our organizations, we should be on the way to get rid of many old-standing abuses. The idea of the church, free and self-governing, with its great heritage of truths, human and divine—the truths of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man—is awake and alive again. We understand, again, our great mission in the evangelization of the world. Above all, we have laboured very hard for the poor and amongst them. And yet—and yet—it all hangs fire. 'We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have, as it were, brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth, neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.' 'Surely I have laboured in vain and spent my strength for naught!' Such a feeling is in the mind of very many of us as we take stock of the powerlessness of the church, in spite of even splendid exceptions in this or that parish, to produce any broad, corporate effect, to make any effective spiritual appeal by its own proper influence, in the great democracy of England

to-day. We are not in touch with the mass of the labouring people.

Is not the reason of this because we are the church of the rich rather than of the poor—of Capital rather than of Labour? By this I mean that in the strata of society the church works from above rather than from below. The opinions and the prejudices that are associated with its administration as a whole are the opinions and the prejudices of the higher and upper-middle classes, rather than of the wage-earners. This becomes the more apparent if you contrast the Church of England in this respect with the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland or with the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland—at least as they have stood, up to the rise of the vast industrial cities, like Glasgow or Dundee, where I suppose that 'labour' stands as much aloof from any existing religious organization as in our English cities.

But I return to the Church of England, and to our confessed failure to be the church of the people in an effective sense in town or country. It is, I believe, the chief test of the vitality of a church of Christ in any country that it should repre-

sent the poor, the wage-earners, those who live by manual labour; that it should be a community in which religion works upward from below. There is our great failure. In the older feudal constitution of things in the country, or in the older industrial period in the towns, when the masters lived surrounded by their 'hands,' it might have been supposed possible for a church specially identified with the point of view of the then governing classes still to be the church of the whole community. But the state of things has passed away. Capital and Labour are names now for great class interests and organizations representing men in masses, and the church finds itself in fact, and on the whole, moving in the grooves which are precisely those from which Christ warned us off; it finds itself expressing the point of view which is precisely not that which Christ chose for His church.

Can this be doubted? Let us judge by the officers of the church. The incomes of the bishops range us, and are meant to range us, in our manner of life, with the wealthier classes, the squires or magnates of the county, the great merchants of the

towns, with whom all our education has accustomed us to associate and to feel. Our incumbents and clergy, with their wives and families, have their natural friends among the gentry or professional classes. It is quite rare to find an artisan or his wife really at home with the clergy. At every point we find ourselves depending upon the support of the capitalist. Our whole system of church charity expresses a bounty administered out of benevolent feeling, by a wealth which makes no apology for enjoying itself, to a poverty which it makes no pretence to share. Our church meetings for counsel only rarely, even in parishes, much more rarely in rural deaneries, never in Houses of Laymen or Church Congresses, discover or express the point of view of the artisan, except by an exceptional effort made for a particular occasion. Committees of church ladies for all sorts of purposes acquiesce in an attitude of patronage towards the wife of the artisan, even more markedly than committees of church laymen. The arrangements of the great majority of our churches in country and town, in spite of the quite unmistakable language of St. James, and,

I must add, in startling contrast to the churches of Roman Catholic Europe in almost all parts—give a marked preference to the well-off.

I have said before that, with all this, we have laboured very hard for the poor and amongst them. At the hand of Him who said, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me,' there is laid up a rich store of benediction for men and women, priests and laymen innumerable, whose unselfish, unremitting, unrequited toil is really known only in the heart of our Lord. That is our real comfort. We are sure that all this labour will not be in vain. It, as it were, authorizes us to claim illumination and guidance in reversing the great wrong and in averting the great judgement, or rather it authorizes us to claim strength to make the right use of divine chastisements. But meanwhile the facts are as I have stated them. I hardly think the truth of what I have been saying can be denied on the whole. The question which ought to hold a prerogative place in the interests of churchmen is, how we are to return to a condition of things nearer

to the intention of Christ—if it may be, without violence or revolution, but, if not, then anyhow to return.

But this—suggestion of remedies—is not the first thing. The first thing is that we should, in the whole bulk of the church, feel and acknowledge, in deep penitence, that we are on wrong lines, so that at present our very victories must prove barren. This sermon is only the cry of a permanently troubled conscience which cannot see its way. Certainly no one has a right to speak with any degree of self-satisfaction or contemptuously of others' failures. The worst feature of the present 'catholic movement' in the Church of England is that its more prominent organs and representatives seem to be so ready to speak scornfully of others, and so little conscious of the failure of the catholic movement really, on any considerable scale, to do the proper work of a Christian church by becoming identified with the working people. Meanwhile, we may trustfully feel that the work which has been done so zealously and faithfully for the poor gives us the best ground for expecting an answer to our penitent prayers.

I have no time to do more than barely enumerate what seem to me to be some lines of hopeful recovery.

1. First of all, I would say, the church must set itself deliberately and of set purpose, as far as possible, to get rid of the administration of poor relief. We must deliberately set ourselves to dissociate the administration of relief from the ministry of the word and sacraments, and to associate it with the state, the municipality, and voluntary organizations of citizens on a purely secular basis. Our Lord's and His apostles' miraculous ministries of help to the sick and needy afford very little analogy for our present methods. You know the famous story of the Pope, luxuriating in the wealth of his Jubilee-offering, and saying to the saint by his side, 'Peter cannot say now, "Silver and gold have I none,"' and how the saint replied, 'No, your Blessedness; neither can he say now, "In the name of Jesus Christ, rise up and walk."' The church can do its utmost to relieve the poor in any way love can suggest, if it be itself poor and of the poor. But where the charity of the church is understood to mean the patronage of the

rich, it can do nothing without disaster. I am quite sure that our first and most necessary step towards regaining our rightful place in the regard of labour is to take the administration of relief-money almost altogether out of the hands of our clergy and church-workers, and to let it be so administered, and by such hands, as that none may think they can either merit it or lose it by attendance or failure to attend at the services of the church. It is not possible to exaggerate how alienating an effect upon exactly that type of independent labour on which our Lord most relied, is exercised by our present system of administering alms. Here, then, is one of the first and most necessary steps of our redemption, and till this is taken all else will be in vain—I mean, till it has ceased to be a plausible taunt that a man or woman goes to church for what can be got.

2. Secondly, we want to make the most of what we have already. We have a really considerable body of communicants who are artisans; but we need to give them their true place and influence, and to mass them, so that their corporate effect shall tell. We must prevent the

parishioners of poor parishes being ousted, or put into a secondary place, by those who come from outside. We must diligently consult their tastes and convenience in respect of the services, hours, and arrangements. We must do our utmost to let them feel that the management of church affairs is in their hands. In matters not belonging to the church's essential order, their mistakes are likely to be more profitable than wiser judgements which are not yet their own. We must take the most serious pains to bring it about that they shall be represented, in sufficient number to make them feel at home, in ruridecanal meetings, and then, gradually, in diocesan assemblies and in the Houses of Laymen.

3. To do all this safely, we must act on the basis of a true sacerdotalism. The ministerial priesthood is in charge of the word and sacraments. It is the duty of the priesthood to maintain unflinchingly the catholic heritage; to suffer no tampering with those things which catholic authority has laid down, or the authority of our own part of the church. But, after all, many of our characteristic arrangements stand, not by catholic authority, but by

the force of use and wont, and pure, unreasoning conservatism. And it is part of a true sacerdotalism that the clergy should help every confirmed person to claim his or her place in the priestly body, and should learn to act, or at least sincerely desire to act (how far we are yet off that !) on the apostolic pattern—' It is not meet that we should leave the word of God to serve tables. . . . We will give ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.' To be effective ministers of the word and sacraments—that is the special business of the clergy. Here we have entrusted to us the principles and the instruments of the true socialism, and the safeguards against the false and misleading socialism which ignores the fact of sin and the need of personal redemption. Oh ! how different would be the position of the church if we clergy would sacrifice everything to concentrate ourselves upon really bringing out the social meaning of our sacraments, upon really understanding and giving voice to the spirit of Christian brotherhood, upon really making ourselves the organs for expressing social justice and uttering effectively the divine wrath upon all that

degrades and crushes the weak and ignorant and poor! Oh! how different would be our moral appeal if Christ's claim upon wealth—Christ's claim for great sacrifices, great abandonments, as the normal exhibitions of a converted heart—were really once again the claim of the actual church upon the clergy and laity!

In all this I am only asking that we should, in penitence and prayer, give ourselves to teaching the faith and practice of Christendom as it is in the Bible. How quickly, then, would many of the questions which now bulk biggest as 'church questions' take a very subordinate place!

Truly we have protected the letter of Scripture, while its spirit of judgement and justice was being ignored; we have contended for ceremonial liberty, while the fundamental meaning of our sacraments of brotherhood was being parodied by a miserable religious selfishness.

4. Once more, we must dissociate the clergy from being identified with the wealthier classes. We who know may say much to palliate the scale of our episcopal incomes. But nothing we can ever say will obliterate the false impression which

our present system makes upon the imagination of the classes of labour. It would be an immense improvement if the bishop received a very much smaller personal salary, with allowances for official expenses, and with a fund for diocesan objects put at his disposal, of which he should give public account.

With the mass of beneficed and unbeneficed clergy there is at least no difficulty from excess of income. What we want to do is to gain, what we at present largely lose, the moral advantages of small incomes. We need, and we are, thank God, realizing the need, to lay open the way to holy orders to promising young men of every class. We must provide for their receiving, fully and adequately, an education liberal and theological. What we want to secure is that, while we train their minds and characters, we should not suffer those of them who are sons of working parents to lose in the process the sympathies and tastes of the best of those amongst whom they had their origin. We want to secure, so far as we can, that when they are ordained, their houses and their tables shall be such that those of the

class they come from should feel themselves at home with them, as they do with the clergy of some other countries. We want utterly to rid ourselves, as of a shameful thing, of the sense that a clergyman whose original home was a workman's home should desire to conceal it. There is no reason in the world, if there were but more of the Christian spirit among Churchmen, why our clerical estate should not come to be utterly freed from the association of class. The real remedy for the evils supposed to be incidental to such a state of things lies in the requirement of an adequate training before ordination.

'These things are difficult. Such fundamental social changes are hard to bring about. We are an unimaginative and conservative people.' True, quite true. But the beginnings are in prayer and penitence and right desire, and in giving the first place in our minds and counsels to the matters that are really of first importance. Meanwhile we must all continue to do our best in the states of life into which it has pleased, or shall please, God to call us.

When our Lord came into the world as man He found the ecclesiastics of His time

and the church parties of His time occupied upon the wrong problems, intent upon the wrong subjects of thought, or at least putting them in the wrong order. They were conservative of things as they were. Their eyes were not open to fresh light. Thus, seeking their own righteousness, they refused to submit themselves to the righteousness of God.

May God give us grace, us who are the representatives of the church of God in this land to-day, not so to excuse ourselves, by the pleas of natural conservatism and natural disposition, as to miss His fundamental message for us in our time!

APPENDIX

MORAL WITNESS OF THE CHURCH ON ECONOMIC SUBJECTS

A REPORT PRESENTED TO THE HOUSES OF CONVOCATION OF CANTERBURY BY A JOINT COMMITTEE (April 16, 1907)[1]

THE subject with which your Committee was specially appointed to deal, viz. the moral witness which the Church ought to bear against certain misuses of money, seemed to us to require, as a preliminary, some more general consideration of those positive principles involved in the production, accumulation, and distribution of wealth which are properly Christian and in the light of which current practices must be judged.

Accordingly, a Sub-Committee was appointed which sought and received communications from a number of students of Christian ethics and of current economics, and from some business men and others interested in social reform. Others allowed the Sub-Committee to receive them and ask them questions. On the basis of these communications, written and oral, the following report has been drawn up, and is presented.

[1] This Report must be taken as having the authority only of the Committee by which it was prepared. (Sold by S.P.C.K. and National Society.)

I. *The Changes in the Economic View.*—There is no doubt that the change which of recent years has come over the attitude of economists towards ethical questions gives the Christian Church a fresh opportunity. The old political economy thought it necessary to isolate the study of the production and distribution of wealth; to deal with it as if no motive were to be admitted into this economic region except the selfish desire of the individual to enrich himself. Abstract laws of supply and demand, in combination with a certain theory of population (Malthus), were supposed to rule out in the scientific treatment of commerce and industry all questions of justice and mercy to the wage-earners, and all moral considerations in the relations between employers and employed. An economic world was postulated in which there was nothing but individuals, each free to pursue, and certain to pursue, his own interest. But, abstract and hypothetical as this economic science professed to be, it ministered undoubtedly to the common human tendency to regard commercial and economic dealings as outside the control of morality and religion. And in spite of the protests of some deep-seeing men (Carlyle, Maurice, Ruskin), the Christian Church allowed itself to be silenced by the terrors of supposed inexorable laws.

But a great change has passed over economics, most of all in Germany, but also in other countries, including England. It has been found that the abstract science was too abstract to be applicable to facts. A man, though engaged in making his living or his fortune, still remains a man, influenced

by manifold passions, prejudices, and feelings, which in countless ways disturb the action of the purely economic motive, or the desire to buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market. Moreover, the majority of men are found to be not free to bargain, or to pursue their own interests. They are too weak and ignorant. They cannot move freely. They are exploited by the strong. This very weakness and ignorance is in itself an economic loss. The 'cheapest' labour proves to be often the dearest. For the truly cheapest labour (in the long run) is the most efficient labour; and experience is now showing that, in far more cases than might be supposed, the gain in the efficiency of the workman, which follows upon such an improvement in his standard of living as secures for him better food and more wholesome surroundings, more than outweighs the additional cost.

Wealth again is more clearly recognized by the present generation of economists to be a means rather than an end. Mere production of material commodities is not considered as the matter of chief importance. The real end of industrial organization is to combine efficient production with such a distribution of the commodities produced, as will enable the greatest number of people to find a full opportunity of self-realization and joy. The true riches of a nation are vigorous and happy men and women, willingly and intelligently co-operating for the good of the community.

II. *Christian Principles of Society.*—An economic science which exhibits this new tendency is no longer an antagonist to Christian principles. Christianity

can breathe freely again in the atmosphere which it generates. For what are the fundamental social principles of Christianity? We may state them as follows: First of all, Christianity inherited from the Old Testament certain social principles, in part embodied in the Law and in part enforced by the prophets and moralists. Thus we find in the Old Testament a profound regard for the poor and helpless (widows and orphans),[1] a reiterated denunciation of those who exact their labour without paying them a sufficient wage.[2] 'The Lord will enter into judgement with the elders of his people, and the princes thereof: It is ye that have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses. What mean ye that ye crush my people, and grind the face of the poor? saith the Lord, the Lord of Hosts.'[3] The tendency of the legislation was to raise the status of the Israelite slave to that of the hired workman, who was to be treated as a 'brother.'[4]

We find a prohibition of usury between Israelite and Israelite[5]; and provision is taken against the

[1] Amos v. 12; Isa. i. 17, 23, x. 2; Jer. vii. 5 f., xxii. 3; Deut. x. 18, xxiv. 17 f., xxvii. 19.

[2] Deut. xxiv. 14 f.; Jer. xxii. 13; Lev. xix. 13; Mal. iii. 5.

[3] Isa. iii. 14, 15.

[4] Hastings' *Dict.* iv. 465; cf. Lev. xxv. 39 f.

[5] Exod. xxii. 25 f.; Lev. xxv. 35–37. This was in the Old Testament a provision for the protection of the poor. There is no reference to it in the New Testament, nor need we enter into the later discussions on the subject.

permanent alienation of the land[1]; various enactments protect labour—e.g. the danger of falling from a roof is to be averted by a railing.[2] The general well-being is a supreme consideration, restricting the selfish acquisition of wealth. Luxury is denounced.[3] Manual labour is held in honour; it is the necessary basis of all society; the labourers 'maintain the fabric of the age; and in the handiwork of their craft is their prayer'—i.e. for them *laborare est orare*.[4]

Christianity did not take over the formal legislation of the Old Testament, but it did inherit its moral principles,[5] which Jesus Christ deepened and universalized. The 'neighbour' to whom we owe duty is now not the fellow member of the Jewish race, but it is every man who has need, though in a special sense the fellow-Christian. The Christian is 'to love his neighbour as himself'; that is, he is not to regard any other person as an instrument for his own advantage, but to consider his brother's interest and well-being, as he considers his own. This is the law of love. Moreover, Christianity assigns to every individual soul or life an absolute and infinite worth which makes it once for all impossible to sanction any one being treated as a mere means to another's

[1] Lev. xxv. 10, 13; cf. Isa. v. 8, against the accumulation of the land in a few hands.

[2] Deut. xxii. 8. The regulation about sanitation in the camp is interesting. Deut. xxiii. 12–14.

[3] Amos iii. 15, vi. 1 f.

[4] Ecclus. xxxviii. 24–34.

[5] e.g. S. James takes up the language of the Old Testament prophets about wealth and wages (v. 1–5).

end. The Christian society is a body in which the interest of the whole and of every part is the governing law for every member. The Christian ethic is thus essentially social. And a special reverence is due to the helpless and weak. They are the 'little ones' whom we are not to offend. Christ died for the weak, as for the strong; and 'there is no respect of persons with God.' Moreover, all the members of the body, whether more or less important, depend one on another, and the suffering of any member of the body is the concern of all.[1] Thus the law of the Christian's life is the service of the brethren. He is set 'not to be ministered unto, but to minister.' His aim is to serve, not to get as much as he can for himself. There lies upon each one the duty of work, that he may 'eat his own bread.'[2] Indeed, St. Paul states the law sharply: 'If a man will not work, neither let him eat.' Moreover, work is regarded as a means of co-operating with a divine purpose of love. It is not to be a means for the selfish accumulation of wealth. The individual wants are to be sternly restricted. Luxury is no more allowed than idleness. Stern warnings are uttered regarding the pursuit of riches.[3] Each is to work with his own hands that he may support the weak,[4] or that he may 'have to give to him that needeth.'[5]

It is true that all this social conception regards primarily the Christian body, 'the brethren.' But there are indications in the New Testament itself that it is to be extended to society at large. The Christian

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 22–27.
[2] 2 Thess. iii. 10–13.
[3] 1 Tim. vi. 8–10.
[4] Acts xx. 35.
[5] Eph. iv. 28.

is to 'honour all men,' as well as to 'love the brotherhood'; the 'love of the brethren' is to extend itself into universal 'love.'[1] The State, as well as the Church, is regarded as a divine institution, even though Pagan[2]; its ministers are God's ministers; and the idea of public spirit is thus extended (so far as circumstances allow) from the Church to the State.

We are persuaded that in the effective reassertion of such Christian principles lies the present opportunity of the Church and one of its chief duties as a witness for Christ. We are persuaded that some of the matters which have held, and still hold, the first place in ecclesiastical or clerical interest are such as the New Testament would lead us to believe to be of quite minor importance. We are further persuaded that the idea of individual salvation has been disastrously isolated in Christian teaching and in current Christian belief from the social idea of original Christianity and the teaching of brotherhood. It was largely because the Church appeared as a society making the welfare of all its members its controlling principle in the acquisition and distribution of wealth, that it made the great progress which history records in the world of the Roman Empire.[3] That at least was one of the chief factors of the impression which it made upon men's hearts and consciences. In our day it appears that the re-enforcement of the obligations of brotherhood is what is needed to rekindle

[1] 1 Pet. ii. 17; 2 Pet. i. 7.

[2] Rom. xiii.; 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2; 1 Pet. ii. 13–17.

[3] See, for instance, Harnack's *Expansion of Christianity*, vol. i., pp. 183–249.

among the mass of the workers the perception of the supreme worth of Christianity.

But apart altogether from such questions of present opportunity, the Christian doctrines of the Fatherhood of God and of the Incarnation imply the teaching of brotherhood with all its social consequences. The Christian cannot fail to recognize that Christ, our Master and our severe Judge, holds us responsible for every one of His members whose life has been wasted by our common neglect.

III. *The Duty of the Christian as an Individual.*— In view, then, of the economic change described above and of the Christian principles of society which we have endeavoured to indicate, what are the matters to which the moral witness of the Church should be specially directed at the present time ?

In part what is needed is that the Church should teach the individual his duty to his neighbour more completely, and with more reference to actual conditions. We have heard too much of the *rights* of property. We have heard enough of the *duties* of property towards the Church in its narrower sense. But we have heard too little (from the authorized Christian teacher) of the fundamental Christian principles in respect of 'getting' and 'spending.'

The duty of the Christian as an individual may be considered in three ways ; he may be regarded (1) as a worker, (2) as a capitalist and employer, and (3) as a consumer.

(1) The Church should declare that the first duty of the Christian, whatever may be his circumstances, is that of work ; for every man according to his

ability must contribute by his service to the common well-being. Idleness, whether it is that of the rich or the poor man, is an offence against God and man. And by work we ought to mean the sincere application of all the man's faculties to his business 'in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call him.' The shirker and the trifler in any class of society are men who have failed to recognize the claim of God upon them.

(2) The Church should teach that the Christian who is an owner of property must recognize that, whether he has inherited or acquired it, he holds it as a sacred trust. He has indeed, for good or evil, as society is now organized, legal authority, within certain limits, over the manner in which it is used, but before God his authority is that of a trustee for society, not of an absolute owner.

And especially, the owner of property as an employer must remember that he is responsible for the conditions under which his business is carried on. The Christian Church which holds that the individual life is sacred, must teach that it is intolerable to it that any part of our industry should be organized upon the foundation of the misery and want of the labourer. The fundamental Christian principle of the remuneration of labour is that the first charge upon any industry must be the proper maintenance of the labourer—an idea which it has been sought to express in popular language by the phrase 'the living wage.'

The Church should also urge upon its members the moral, as distinct from the legal obligation, of providing and making efficient whatever in the way of

apparatus or arrangements is necessary to safeguard the life and health of the worker.

(3) The Church should teach the moral responsibility of the consumer; that is, that no Christian has the right to demand commodities at a price which he knows, or can ascertain, to be incompatible with the adequate remuneration of the workers and proper conditions of industry; or, again, by deferring payment, to render it more difficult to secure these objects.

But in carrying out such ideas of a man's duty the individual by himself is no doubt hampered in a thousand ways. The single employer or capitalist is often almost as powerless to alter the system of which he is a part as is a labourer. When 'the system' makes it necessary for him to do what his conscience condemns, he can of course, with whatever difficulty, refuse to do it, and suffer the financial loss or ruin involved. We have almost dropped out of our current Christian teaching the idea that a Christian may be called upon to make any great financial or other sacrifice for conscience' sake. But it is doubtful whether any more effective instrument of reform in our industrial or financial system could be found than the multiplication of such protests of the individual conscience against wrong, which at present are made but rarely. We believe that nothing would so effectually stir the common conscience as such examples of splendid renunciation.

IV. *The Duty of the Christian as Citizen.*—But undoubtedly, as we have said, the individual by his private action is able to do little to alter what is amiss. The law must help—that is the expressed will and power of the whole community; and all

serious students of society are at the present time ready to recognize this. Hardly any one could be found to advocate a return to the 'laissez faire' policy of the days preceding the Factory Acts. Here then we touch a new department of duty. The individual Christian is also a citizen. As a citizen he must inform himself on economic matters and take his share in public service.

Thus (1) he must support the existing law in the restrictions which it imposes upon the methods actually pursued in the production of wealth.

At present we are, as a nation, much more jealous for the maintenance of the laws which exist for the protection of property than of those which exist for the protection of the worker. These latter are at present in many cases ignored or violated—through the fault both of employers and of the workers themselves. But they embody the attempt of our society as a whole to protect its weak and ignorant members against others and against themselves. They are thus among the most important elements in our legislation, and what is necessary is that society as a whole should rally to their support, for in fact it is the absence of a sufficient public opinion which often makes them a dead letter. In this matter the Church has the responsibility (which it has certainly not realized hitherto) of teaching its members their duty as individuals. And moreover it has at its disposal a parochial machinery extending all over the land which, valuable as it is at present, might be made much more valuable if there were a wider diffusion among its workers of necessary information. The district visitors who are at work in almost all

parishes of our Church might, if properly instructed in the rudiments of industrial and sanitary law, without unwelcome interference, do a great deal to promote its observance and to defend the poor against their own carelessness and ignorance.

(2) But the maintenance of the existing law is only one aspect of the Christian man's duty as a citizen. It is time, we think, that the Christian Church should make clear to itself the nature of the demand for the reconstruction of society which is at present urged upon us. Behind the more technical (industrial and political) proposals, lies a fundamental appeal for justice, which the Christian Church cannot ignore. It is bound to make a much more thorough endeavour than it has yet made to appreciate this appeal in all its bearings, and to consider whether the charge made against the present constitution and principles of the industrial world, and the present division of the profits of industry, is a just charge. Certainly the Christian society is competent to deal with the fundamental moral question, and is bound to press upon its members the duty of facing it.

Then, in consequence of such deepened reflection upon the fundamental moral issue, it is undoubtedly the case that we shall need an advance in our present law touching social and industrial problems. It is time, we think, that the Christian conscience of the country voted urgency among parliamentary and municipal questions for all the group of problems which concern the grossly unequal distribution of wealth and well-being ; the waste of life and capacity through lack of proper nourishment and training ; the sweating of women's and children's labour ; the

deficiency, in the surroundings of so many, of those things which are the ordinary essentials of physical and moral well-being.

We do not desire that the Church as a body should take a side with this or that political party; nor, again, that the Church should favour any one class. We would have it apply its moral teaching to all classes indifferently, to the labourer as to the employer. There is as much need to teach the workman the duty of conscientious and efficient work, as to teach the employer his responsibility in dealing with his workmen; and there is perhaps quite as much misuse of money at the present time among the poor as among the rich, relatively to what they receive. But with whatever class the Church is dealing, we are convinced that it has a teaching which it ought to give on all matters which concern the acquisition and distribution of wealth, in its bearing on human lives; and that this teaching involves not only private effort, but municipal and political reforms. Thus we want the Church as a body to come forward to the support of such legislation as embodies or tends to render more practicable the Christian view of the worth and meaning of human life, and the belief in the divine principle of justice.

(3) It is no doubt the case that any industrial readjustment may involve an increase in the financial burden upon the community, temporary or permanent. This is a complicated question. It will of course be urged that a better industrial system will, in the long run, increase and not diminish the wealth of the community. But this question we do not touch. Only we are sure that for the Christian citizen there

are public objects for the attainment of which public expenditure is to be accepted voluntarily and not grudgingly.

Thus we want every Christian to set himself against the false but very prevalent view that the contributions from income which are required of every citizen for public purposes are on the whole to be regarded as burdens which it is natural to resent, and even, where possible, to evade. The Christian conscience ought surely to approve in principle of a large public expenditure on objects which are calculated to strengthen and enrich the common life.

We cannot leave this part of the subject without urging that the Christian, and, we must add, more particularly the Churchman, ought to be ready to make the sacrifices of various kinds which are involved in standing for, and holding, municipal and public offices; and whether as a voter, or himself an officer of the community, we must look to him to maintain the fundamentally Christian principle as to the worth of human life, and as to the duty of the whole community towards its weakest members.

(4) Finally, we feel that the existing methods by which the Church relieves the poor—that is, the administration of 'charity' by the Church, as by Christian bodies generally—has been shown in its results to be singularly unproductive of permanent good. 'As regards the poor, the results have not proved satisfactory in the past, and neither response nor result are greatly different now.'[1] On the other

[1] Booth's *Life and Labour*, 3rd Series, vol. vii., pp. 406 ff. The agreement among men of experience on this subject is very impressive.

hand the existing system is responsible for much alienation from the Church, and from religious worship, of self-respecting workers, who are afraid of being supposed to come 'for what they can get.' We think that such considerations as we have urged above will tend, not indeed to make Christians disparage or neglect the duty and privilege of almsgiving, but to make them feel that something more is wanted than improvements in our methods of administering charitable relief. We have to go deeper to the grounds of the existing misery and want and unemployment; and, while we do our best to deal with the present distress, direct our chief attention towards furthering the reorganization of society on such principles of justice as will tend to reduce poverty and misery in the future to more manageable proportions.

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